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THE MORAL OF THE BRADFORD SPEECH.

LOUIS NAPOLEON is not the only potentate in Europe who has been compelled to draw in his horns before a storm of public disapprobation. That other child and champion of democracy, Mr. JOHN BRIGHT, has recognised the necessity of having recourse to the better part of valour. Though we have some reason to be proud of the progress of our pupil, we do not arrogate to the press the whole merit of Mr. BRIGHT's new-born discretion. We have no doubt that he has received abundant remonstrances from his terrified and discomfited allies against the havoc he was making of the cause which they had rashly entrusted to his charge. The result is satisfactory, because it affords solid evidence of the general good sense and good feeling of the country. We hear no more sneers, for the present, at our "boasted Constitution;" and we should not even wonder if Mr. BRIGHT, in the last few weeks, may have sought to obtain a glimpse of it. At Bradford, the Monarchy was spared the patronage of the member for Birmingham, and we need not, therefore, just yet go to the expense of altering the superscription of the coinage in order to inform the various quarters of the globe that VICTORIA is, by the grace of Mr. BRIGHT, and during good behaviour, Queen of Great Britain, Ireland, and their dependencies in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australasia. Even the House of Lords now finds favour in his eyes. He is no longer quite so confident that "an hereditary Chamber 'cannot be a permanent institution in a free country.'" He has found out that the Peers "sit there by law—they sit 'there by the consent of the people;'" and, still more wonderful to relate, he is "not proposing to disturb them." For the present, he confines himself to the modest ambition of making the Peers "rub their eyes." Whether Mr. BRIGHT will ever do much for the political education of his countrymen is more than we can say; but in the meanwhile, it is pleasant to remark that they are doing something for his. We shall not wonder if, in six weeks more, he evinces a still further progress towards an acquaintance with the sentiments of Englishmen and the institutions of England. Even the Church gets off without a sneer, for he is actually ashamed of the time-honoured title of Dissenter, and aspires to the dignity of a "Free Churchman"—we are sure that the Establishment will value the compliment of so distinguished a namesake. We hear no more invective against people who are "born with silver 'spoons in their mouth"—the House of Commons is no longer "a deliberate fraud and deception"—nor is it considered necessary to repeat that the rich are the natural enemies of the poor, or that the aristocracy have no desire but to keep those below them in ignorance and degradation. We do not revive the memory of Mr. BRIGHT's former language for the purpose of exposing afresh deformities which were but too naked already. We call attention to the changed tone which even this daring revolutionist has found it necessary to adopt, as a noble and striking testimony to the real integrity and soundness of English opinion. Mr. BRIGHT has "tried on" the "democratic ticket," and has discovered that it will not do. If the style of his previous orations had been found to go down with the country, the furnace of Bradford would no doubt have been heated seven times hotter than the furnaces of Birmingham, Manchester, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. We do not question but that there was plenty more of the same article where those speeches came from. The brazen fountains of demagogism, shallow as they are, were not yet run dry. Mr. BRIGHT's virtue is not humility, and candour is not his fault; yet even he has the grace to confess that "his expressions have not always been judicious, and that he may have committed some mistakes."

We doubt, however, whether he has rightly fathomed the

real source of all his "mistakes," and discovered the causes which have made the true expression of his mind so eminently "injudicious." We are willing to assist the penitent in the only Reform in which he has yet made any rational progress—the reform of himself. If he will only honestly disfranchise the rotten boroughs of ignorance, envy, and unfairness which monopolize the political power of his mind, and enfranchise in the principles of truth, justice, and reason, he will have done something to establish his own mental constitution on a sounder basis. The error which has been fatal to Mr. BRIGHT's success is that he has addressed the English people in an American spirit. His earlier speeches were couched in the true slang of the Yankee platform. In the country of his affections he would have been hailed with universal admiration as "a ringtailed screamer who was fit to chaw 'up the universe.'" But the old country is so far behind the age that it is lamentably indifferent to "screamers," ringtailed or otherwise, and on the whole, having regard to its own private convenience, prefers that the universe should not be "chawed up." In the United States, a man who had "stumped" the provinces as Mr. BRIGHT has done would not have had the mortification of confessing that his language had not been "judicious," and that he had "made mistakes." Instead of finding himself stranded by the ebbing tide of public favour, he would have been borne by a swelling torrent of popular clamour into the highest place of political power. Why is it that the same arts, the same spirit, and the same language which, on the other side of the Atlantic, would have made him President of the United States, have in England wrecked what political influence he already possessed? Why, but that the demagogue, who is the despot of a democracy, is powerless in a free country? When we have had the same training, we, too, may possibly learn the same lesson. Give us half a century of unmixed democracy, and we shall perhaps tolerate the language which Mr. BRIGHT finds that it is not at present safe to employ. We are not yet at the level of American opinion. The English mind must have passed through the processes of the ballot and universal suffrage before it becomes a proper canvas on which Mr. BRIGHT may lay his native colours. English feeling is not yet sufficiently demoralized and deadened by the servile despotism of an absolutist ignorance to have lost all sentiment of honour and all respect for freedom. England is still a free country, because her institutions still preserve to every class their liberty and their independence, their right to utter their own opinions, and their power to defend their own interests. Intelligence is not yet oppressed by numbers—property is not menaced by force—justice is not outraged by clamour—the mind of the nation is not enthralled by the violence of the mob. A people so educated and so protected are not easily deluded or betrayed. They revolt with a natural virtue from that which is abhorrent to their conscience—they reject with instinctive repugnance the poison which they feel to be fatal to their life. This is the true secret of that universal reprobation which has gone forth from the whole heart and mind of the English nation against the reckless language of Mr. BRIGHT. No wonder that he stands aghast at the unexpected response which he has evoked. Like another orator, scarcely less distinguished—

Awhile he stood expecting
Their universal shout and loud applause
To fill his ear; when contrary he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
A dismal, universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn.

But let not Mr. BRIGHT be too much disheartened. The English people, it is true, are not yet prepared to imbibe his sentiments in their purity, or to embrace his doctrines in their unmitigated form. The first dose which he has administered has been too strong for their moral system. This

comes of not understanding the "boasted Constitution." He is wise to mollify his prescription. In time, his countrymen may perhaps swallow his principles as greedily as an opium-eater swallows laudanum. If the hardness of their heart and the obstinacy of their unbelief are not as yet favourable to the missionary of democracy, let him be content to work by slow degrees, and he may one day succeed. The independence of thought and the honesty of feeling which form the subsoil of the English public mind are very little favourable to the growth of demagogism; but, by a system of artificial cultivation, he may convert the natural stubbornness of the native clay. He may subdue that independence by making it subject to the tyranny of a mob—he may corrupt that honesty by the effective machinery of the ballot—he may demoralize public opinion by making an appeal to the ignorant passions of a numerical majority the single avenue to political power. He has begun well. The Bradford Reform Bill is the first step to the consummation of his hopes, for it is admirably fitted to undermine the Constitution which he has failed to storm. He is wise to have exchanged the rashness of VARRO for the policy of FABIUS, and there is the better chance that he may make good his great maxim, "Delenda est Carthago"—the English Constitution shall perish. He may at last reduce us to the position of which he is himself so proud; and we may all be able to say that we "cannot see the English Constitution"—for the best of all reasons, that it will have ceased to exist. When the principle of representation shall have been drowned in the supremacy of numbers, the demagogue will no longer have anything to fear from freedom, whether of thought, of feeling, or of will. We shall then all be the slaves of the most ignorant, who are themselves the serfs of the most false.

England is not yet reduced to the low level of public spirit which is essential to the success of such oratory as Mr. BRIGHT'S. But should he once obtain the lever which he seeks in his new Reform Bill—a lever, we must say, constructed with an admirable skill in democratic mechanism—that level would be quickly reached. Let us once give him "whereon he may stand," and he will have no difficulty in crumbling the "boasted Constitution" into dust. The AJAX of Birmingham has been overthrown—the ACHILLES of Glasgow is discomfited—but the SINON of Bradford may prevail. We have but to grant him what he asks, and the work is done. When the sentiment of public honour shall have been corrupted by the Ballot, and the independence of public opinion coerced by the numerical majority of populous towns, Mr. BRIGHT need no longer be at the pains to constrain himself into an uncongenial caution. When the dry rot of democracy shall have thoroughly infiltrated itself into the fibre of a free Constitution, its barriers will no longer oppose any real resistance to his violent injustice. Then he may rail with impunity at the history of a nation which no longer respects itself—he may scoff without apprehension at a freedom which has ceased to exist—he may traffic without reserve in the passions of the ignorant, who will have become omnipotent without ceasing to be servile. Then he may say of England what he will—he may do with Englishmen what he pleases. For then the wished-for day will have dawned, when injustice will no longer be "injudicious," and when mendacity will no more be a "mistake." No free press will then be permitted to "bark" and "bray" at the "great and good protector"—the censorship of the tar and feathers will "brush away" from the path of our English Saviour of Society the "miserable de-tractors" who humble his arrogance and expose his blunders. For when once the servility of democracy is established, the despotism of the demagogue is assured. Why do we dwell on these things? Because, in pointing out to Mr. BRIGHT how alone he can win, we show at the same time to the country how alone it may not be lost. The spirit of the nation is yet unbroken—its instincts are true, its freedom is intact. The egregious failure of Mr. BRIGHT'S democratic agitation has at least proved this—that the intelligence of the people, which is the garrison of the Constitution, cannot be overpowered by force. He has been driven back shattered and broken from the unbreached walls which he was rash enough to assail. It only remains to take care that he shall not enter by fraud the fortress which he has been unable to force.

IS THE DANGER OVER?

THE *Times* has formally announced that the danger of war is over. We should be glad to be able to endorse this most welcome announcement. But there are, unhappily,

still facts which look in the other direction. The preparations at Toulon are going on as actively as ever. Ammunition, biscuit and beef are being furnished in large quantities. Horses are being bought for the cavalry. Old ships of war are being converted into transports. What does all this mean? We have heard nothing more ominous than the report of the *Times* Correspondent himself, that such preparations are said by the French officials to be intended for Algeria, Senegal, or China. The same correspondent also reports that among the chief persons of the French War Office there still prevails a confident expectation of war in the spring. The design of an attack on Austria may have been abandoned, or it may never have been entertained. It may have given way before the numbers, attitude, splendid organization and masterly movements of the Austrian army in Lombardy, and the real absence of revolutionary enthusiasm which appears to exist among the Lombard population. It may have been a mere cloak for some totally different design. There can be no offence to the admirers of the French EMPEROR, whom we are glad to see taking full advantage of our free press, in saying that the special virtues which he displayed in making his way to supreme power were not precisely those of openness and good faith. The plea in his defence is that openness and good faith, like other commonplace moral qualities and rules, are dispensed with in the case of master spirits, bent upon high designs. That there is a darkness and reserve—a tendency to achieve great results by looking one way and springing another—in the author of the *coup d'état*, is not and cannot be denied. LOUIS NAPOLEON is undoubtedly not looking at this country, at Malta, or at Egypt, while he carries on his preparations at Toulon. He is looking, if at anybody, at Austria. But possibly it may not be on Austria that he means, or ever meant, to spring. Among the many personal anecdotes current about the EMPEROR's skill as a tactician, it is said that on the eve of the *coup d'état*, and when suspicion of his design was rife, he met a member of the Chamber who had recently lost his mother, and condoled with him on the mournful event. It is indeed a sad thing, and one hard to bear, said the Deputy, to lose a parent to whom one has been so tenderly attached. One thing, replied the PRESIDENT of the REPUBLIC, is still sadder, and still harder to bear—to be suspected of plotting to overthrow a Constitution one has sworn to preserve. The Deputy went away satisfied that the danger was over, and communicated his satisfaction to the destined occupants of the prison vans of December.

We cordially wish that the EMPEROR may in some measure redeem his honour and efface his past career by keeping good faith with allies who have kept good faith with him, and by giving effect to the most politic as well as the best words he ever uttered—"the Empire is peace." Nor do we believe him—unscrupulously ambitious as his notorious acts have proved him to be—to be insensible to the attractions of an honourable name. But he has collected and is collecting immense means of aggressive war. "The young man is an 'honest man,'" says Dame Quickly. "Vat shall de honest 'man do in my closet?" replies Dr. Caius. The Empire may be peace; but what does an Empire which is peace mean by getting up its Toulon fleet? Sudden and extensive arming when no one threatens is in itself an aggressive measure, and one which those who profess to give a more satisfactory account of the EMPEROR's character and conduct are bound, for our reassurance, to explain. We are inclined to think that there are two great securities for the continuance of peace, the first of which exists, while the second unhappily has still to be provided. The first security is that the wisdom and morality of the French people are on the whole greatly superior to those of the rulers, who, on the Imperialist theory of Government, are supposed to concentrate in their own person all the wisdom and morality of the nation. The second security is a Channel fleet so powerful as to make any attempt on England as hopelessly impracticable as it would be glaringly treacherous and base. We do not press the augmentation of our armaments without deeply feeling how miserable a thing it is to increase the fiscal burdens of our people for that which will make them no return, and to convert the fruits of industry, which might themselves be fruitful of happiness and civilization, to the barren and detested purposes of war. It is but little consolation to think that the nation which menaces us through the profligate and reckless ambition of its rulers, brings upon itself heavier burdens of conscription and taxation than those which it imposes upon us. The peacemonger, who would have us to throw down

our arms in the presence of a highwayman, is himself the greatest promoter of the war which he detests. But what good and right-thinking man is there who does not look forward with fervent expectation to the day when the world may free itself from the yoke of these military tyrants, and when the interest and morality of nations may be allowed free play in reducing the cost of armaments and preserving the blessings of peace?

All questions of Whig or Tory apart, it is deplorable that at this moment, when the utmost vigilance and firmness on the part of our Government are required, our diplomacy should be in the hands of a thoroughly inferior man and a self-proclaimed parasite of the Emperor of the FRENCH. In accepting his difficult and momentous post, Lord MALMSESBURY may, like other members of the "diggings" Ministry, have shown laudable devotion to his party; but unfortunately Providence does not reward devotion to a party with a supernatural bestowal of qualities in which a man is naturally deficient. In the same manner we have no doubt that all will be done at the Admiralty which zeal and good intentions can effect; but zeal and good intentions, even when united with a liberal desire to render Tory principles palatable to their opponents, will not do the work of a first-rate administrator and a great master of naval affairs in getting an efficient Channel Fleet rapidly to sea. Unluckily, too, for the firmness and dignity of England at this moment, the master spirit of the Government is a tactician most dangerously addicted to low and shallow intrigue, who not long ago betrayed, for the purposes of faction, a secret despatch to the GOVERNOR-GENERAL of India, vitally affecting the public interest in a great struggle, and who is now stirring up the discontent of the Ionian Islands by a mission obviously planned for the purpose of banishing from Parliament a dreaded opponent or a more dreaded friend. The taint of a personal connexion with the French EMPEROR, going far beyond all the bounds of proper diplomatic intercourse, adheres to the leading member of the present Government, in common, unfortunately, with almost all our public men. The last traditions of a loftier school seem to linger in Lord ABERDEEN, whose name is now in the mouths of men of all parties for better reasons, we are persuaded, than because his age and declining health have finally removed him from the rivalries of public life. England, when represented by him, and by men of his school, moved among nations as an English gentleman moves among other men, dignified but not haughty, conciliatory but not servile, regardful of her own interests but not grasping, exercising an influence that was more felt than displayed, with many friends but no accomplices, showing frankness and courtesy towards all Governments, but reposing blind confidence in none.

MR. BRIGHT'S REFORM BILL.

OF the causes that have led to the marked change of tone which characterized the Bradford speech, and of the lesson which prudent men will deduce therefrom, we speak in another place. Before discussing the fundamental principles of the measure which Mr. BRIGHT has propounded, we are happy to avail ourselves of his confession that his former speeches were "not judicious in their expression, and "that he has committed some mistakes." A man who finds it necessary for his own purposes to avow thus much has no great right to complain of the criticisms by which those "mistakes" were exposed, or of the censures which have brought him to a sense that his expressions were "injudicious." If we take note of this acknowledgment, it is not with the object of triumphing over Mr. BRIGHT—that, in the present state of public opinion, would be but an inglorious victory. We value it chiefly because it dispenses us from all further trouble in dealing with his first half-dozen orations. As Mr. BRIGHT himself seems to have found out that they had better not have been spoken, and as all the rest of the world agrees with him in that opinion, there is really nothing more to be said about the matter, and we may, *nemine contradicente*, sweep them away into the limbo of forgotten rubbish.

Nevertheless, in discussing the particular plan which Mr. BRIGHT has proposed, we cannot be altogether unmindful of the ultimate aims which its projector has avowed. The intention of the legislator is a safe clue to the meaning of a statute. Little Red Riding Hood was a simple child, but she never would have taken the wolf for her grandmamma if he had only thought, in the middle of their walk, of concealing

his face in the ancestral cloak. The silliest of Red Riding Hoods is likely to have the best of a wolf who howls first, and gets into bed afterwards. We shall not put ourselves into the power of Mr. BRIGHT, and then ask what is the use of his great teeth. We know that already—first, because he has himself told us, and secondly, because we have seen his tail, and, indeed, the whole of his hide. When he talks of the principles of CHATHAM, of FOX, and of GAY, we are not in the least taken in. We know perfectly well all the time who he is, and what he wants. His discretion comes somewhat too late. His Bill may be only an instalment of his whole scheme, but it is a fragment from whose proportions we can fill up the whole edifice of democracy. Mr. BRIGHT has changed his tone, but we do him the justice to admit that he has not altered his mind. His plan is the plain practical embodiment of the sentiments which his speeches conveyed. It is a direct and deadly blow at the principles of that Constitution for which he has avowed his contempt. It is the working machinery for carrying into effect that hatred of classes which is the pervading spirit of his political philosophy. It is the development in practice of that injustice in which he is theoretically so eminent a proficient.

The first thing that must strike the most careless reader of the Bradford speech, as of all the others, is the reckless shallowness of the man who undertakes thus off-hand to revolutionize the whole political organization of the country. The gentleman who "wrote half a letter to demolish BURKE" was hardly in a falser position than the author of a Reform Bill who has only made up half his mind on the subject of Reform. Here we have this profound and enlightened agitator, who, after three months' flourish of trumpets, brings in his well-matured and well-considered plan, and, lo and behold! he has not yet determined what franchise he shall take. It seems that the pet project of a rating franchise, which was ushered in with so many blunders, and bolstered up by so many misstatements, is now fairly thrown overboard. The ignorance with which this scheme was advanced, and the levity with which it has been abandoned, are very fair tests of the solidity of Mr. BRIGHT's judgment, and of the value of his political knowledge. Household suffrage, or rating suffrage, is all one to him. We are to pay our money, and to take our choice. Such is the prudence and sagacity of the politician who tells us that he is "deeply impressed with a sense of the responsibility of a man who undertakes to guide the deliberations of his countrymen." Why does not he settle the question by tossing up half-a-crown? It would bring him to a speedier, and probably to a more rational, decision than he is likely to arrive at in any other method.

Any one who has ever studied the question for five minutes must perceive that the settlement of the question of the franchise must be antecedent to the discussion of the distribution of seats. How are you to decide to what places seats shall be apportioned, unless you have first made up your mind who are the people that are finally to dispose of them? What is the test which is to determine your distribution of seats? Is it numbers? Then, to give effect to that principle, your franchise must be based on numbers. Is it intelligence? But it is to no purpose to give seats to places in which intelligence centres, unless the eventual disposal of the seats is to belong to the intelligence in virtue of which they are conceded. Is property your guide? Then what is the use of bestowing the representation on places where property is aggregated, if, when you have given the seats on account of the property, the possessors of the property are not to dispose of them. What is to be the basis of the plan of distribution? asks Mr. BRIGHT. "Population?" "No. Some may say property. Yes, property has a great deal to do with it. Taxes? Taxes have a great deal to do with it. "I will give you, then, one or two facts. I propose to give "to Manchester and Liverpool six members each. What "do they pay annually to the Government in income-tax "under Schedules A and D, in house-tax, assessed taxes, "and land-tax?" We beg the attention of any man of common sense and ordinary intelligence to this argument. We are much mistaken if it does not give a very exact measure of Mr. BRIGHT's honesty and logic. "I am going," he says, "to give Manchester and Liverpool six members "each, because they pay annually such a large sum under "Schedules A and D of the income-tax, and still more towards "the house-tax, the assessed taxes, and the land-tax." Well and good, say his admiring audience. Here is a man who has a great respect for property—what a shame to accuse him

of revolutionary views! We must ask leave, however, to cross-examine this candid gentleman. You are going to give twelve seats to Manchester and Liverpool because they pay so much in income, and assessed, and house, and land taxes. Of course you are going, we suppose, to give the disposal of these seats to the persons who pay these taxes which entitle Manchester and Liverpool to their twelve representatives! But then the real truth of the matter comes out. "Oh dear," says Mr. BRIGHT, "I could not think of such a thing for moment. I claim the twelve seats on the ground of the taxes, but I mean to establish a franchise which shall place the disposition of the seats in the hands of the numerical majority who don't pay one single farthing of any one of these taxes."

We may illustrate by an example the real bearing of the argument on which this project is based. In Paris, during the Republic, the majority of the electoral body held Socialist opinions. MM. LOUIS BLANC and LEDRU ROLLIN, we will suppose, may have proposed to give Paris fifty representatives instead of half a dozen. If they had enjoyed the advantage of being as logical and as sincere as our English democrat, they would have said,—"We propose to increase the number of the representatives of Paris because of its great property and the large amount of taxation which it pays." Does any one imagine that the owners of that great property and the payers of those heavy taxes would have accepted with alacrity the disinterested good offices of such benefactors? Would not they have said, "You hypocrites and impostors! While you pretend to be consulting our advantage, you know that you are plotting our destruction. There is no petty province, no little city in France, whose deputies do not better represent the property of Paris, than the members who are elected by the *proletaires* of the Seine. If you want, as you pretend, to give us power in proportion to our property and our taxes, either limit the franchise, or diminish rather than increase the number of members in whose choice we have no weight, and who are elected exclusively by those whose opinions are adverse to our interests." We think the reader will now have no difficulty in perceiving that, until the basis of the franchise is settled, all plans for the distribution of seats are simply delusive and absurd. It is obvious that, with a franchise below a certain point, the very last thing the possessors of property and the taxpayers of Manchester and Liverpool could desire, would be the increase of members who, though elected in their towns, are not elected by them.

When we pass on to what Mr. BRIGHT truly calls the capital feature of the whole scheme, the monstrous inconsequence and illogical injustice of his mind become still more apparent. He tells us that "it is necessary for the satisfaction of common sense and justice, that the franchises should be fairly, and with such equality as can be arrived at, distributed among all classes of the people who are called upon to obey the law." What this large-minded statesman's conceptions of fairness and equality of distribution are, we may gather from the practical proposition which follows this plausible preface. "I exhort you," he says, to "repudiate without mercy any Bill of any Government if it does not allot the seats obtained from the extinction of the small boroughs, mainly among the great city and town population of the kingdom." Here is "fairness and equality" with a vengeance. This is Mr. BRIGHT's notion of distributing political power equitably "among all classes of the people who are called upon to obey the law." He professes to found himself on the general principles of the Reform Bill of 1832. And yet, though he tells us that that Bill gave sixty-three of the disposable seats to boroughs, and sixty-five to the counties—following, that is, the rule of an equal division—he has the impudence to propose that, out of all the vacancies which he intends to create, just twenty-six shall be given to the counties, and all the rest to the large towns.

It is difficult to say whether the principles on which he founds his disfranchisement or those by which he regulates his redistribution are the most preposterous and one-sided. Since the great struggle of 1832, it is universally admitted that constituencies which are in effect subject to the predominant influence of particular individuals are inconsistent with the constitution of representative systems. But neither at that time nor at any other has it been contended that representation consists in the exclusive accumulation of political power in the hands of any particular class, still less of any accidental aggregations of population. The object

of the Reform Bill of 1832 was not to extinguish constituencies because they were not large, but because they were not independent. Whether the fixing of a particular figure of population was the best method of carrying out this end, may be greatly doubted. But we believe that, in fact, though the rule which was adopted did not include all the dependent boroughs, it hardly extinguished one which was really independent. But what does Mr. BRIGHT do? By a mere arithmetical rule of thumb, he proposes at one swoop to abolish some 130 seats, without the slightest regard to the real character of the constituencies to which they are at present attached. It may be very well to put an end to Arundel, and Richmond, and Calne, and other places where the influence of particular individuals overpowers the independence of the constituency. But why are such places as Wells, and Reigate, and Leominster, and Tewkesbury, and Liskeard, and Guildford, and Bewdley, to be abolished? Why are Windsor, Lewes, Bridgwater, Newcastle-under-Lyne, Truro, Clithero, Salisbury, Stafford, Hereford, Scarborough, Durham, Winchester, Taunton, Rochester, and Berwick to be shorn of half their representation, in order to give six more members to the Tower Hamlets? The very character of the scheme shows that Mr. BRIGHT has not mastered the elementary conception of the nature of representative institutions. The essence of representation is variety of constituencies and independence in the electoral body, not uniformity of population and a mere numerical monotony. These small but independent towns are among the most valuable elements in our political system. They are the strongholds of the intelligent middle classes of the country, who are swamped in the great populations of the manufacturing cities. It is these places that give us that variety of representation which we venture to think is to be preferred to an indefinite multiplication of COXES and WILLIAMSES and AYTONS and TOWNSEADS. No wonder Mr. BRIGHT has been told, as he admits, that the shopkeepers are against him. He is very indignant because "Dilly, Dilly, Dilly, won't come and be killed." They have quite sense enough to see that, though the vituperation of Mr. BRIGHT is addressed to the aristocracy, it is against the middle class that his policy, whether of disfranchisement or redistribution, will practically operate. He takes away from them all those places where their influence is really undisputed, and he gives them in exchange the worthless boon of constituencies in which, by the franchise which he proposes to create, they must necessarily be in a perpetual minority. Credit is claimed for Mr. BRIGHT for not having proposed electoral districts. But what he does propose is ten times worse. Instead of the dead level which is the mischief of electoral districts, we have one gaping bottomless abyss.

But if the principle on which Mr. BRIGHT proceeds in his project of disfranchisement is indicative of the shallowness of the demagogic intellect, his plan of redistribution is still more characteristic of his narrow sympathies and class prejudices. The enlarged mind of this sagacious statesman seems to be possessed with the single idea that England consists exclusively of two classes of beings—landlords and cotton-spinners. These are the devils and angels of his political philosophy. He supposes that all statesmanship consists in aggrandizing the one and humiliating the other. Of the varied interests, the diverse classes, the complicated relations of a great and free country, this shallow pretender knows little and cares less. His political wisdom is founded on the same principle as the currier's maxim,— "There is nothing like leather." And certainly he treats us to leather à discretion. While he strips of their share in the representation a score of independent capital county towns, the places on which he concentrates the whole of the political power which he assumes to distribute, are almost without exception confined to the great seats of commercial and manufacturing industry, which certainly have no reason to complain of want of influence and weight in the House of Commons. Walsall, Rochdale, Ashton, Huddersfield, Bury, Dudley, Swansea, Paisley, Merthyr Tydfil, Salford, Sheffield, Bristol, Leeds, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Staley Bridge, Bromley, Finsbury, Westminster, Southwark, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets A, Tower Hamlets B, Marylebone—these are the defenceless little Benjamins for whom he reserves his impartial tenderness. Monstrous and unjust as such a proposition would be even with the existing franchise, it is still more preposterous when we consider it with regard to the new suffrage which Mr. BRIGHT proposes to introduce. Not only are the places which are to return members to be exclusively

of one particular kind, but the constituencies which are to vote for them are to be also, by an overwhelming majority, of one particular class. Mr. BRIGHT has not exactly made up his mind what franchise he will ultimately take, but this at least he tells us—that he intends to treble the number of voters. Now mark the consequences of this. Not only is the predominance in the representation to be accumulated in the populous towns, but the whole of the representatives so allotted are to be elected by a numerical majority, in which the voters below the existing 10*l.* householders shall be as three to one. After this, is it surprising that a universal shout of disgust and alarm should have greeted such a proposal from every corner of the country? No wonder he finds that the shopkeepers are against him. They don't want to be Tower Hamletized.

Mr. BRIGHT at Bradford anticipated that, "before the week was over, the public would see in many newspapers that he was treating the counties in a manner which is not fair, considering their population, and the great property which is comprised within their borders." For once he is perfectly right. The public have seen that fact set forth pretty largely in a great many newspapers of every creed of politics and of every shade of opinion. Mr. BRIGHT has the happy faculty of arraying against himself and his schemes every possible interest and every conceivable class. His treatment of the counties is a topic already so completely exhausted that we need hardly refer to his novel and highly constitutional theory of the representative character of the House of Lords. We do not stop at this moment to discuss the very profound proposition that the Upper House, nominated by the Crown, is really a representative body whose business it is to represent the landed interest. As the House of Lords is not permitted to interfere in questions of taxation, it is eminently well qualified to protect the pecuniary rights of the cultivators of the soil. But what we more especially wish to call attention to, is the purpose for which Mr. BRIGHT employs this singular proposition. What he says is this: "The land shall not be represented in the House of Commons, because it is already represented in the House of Lords. And now I will construct a House of Commons such that the House of Lords shall not have the power or the courage to represent anything at all. In fact, the landed interest shall have no representation at all except that of the body which, as I have told you, I will soon teach to rub its eyes." Everybody will acknowledge the eminent justice and conspicuous fairness of this statesmanlike arrangement, and how completely it carries out his declaration, that "for the satisfaction of common sense and justice, political power should be fairly, and with such equality as we can arrive at, distributed among all classes."

Public opinion has already pronounced on this monstrous and impudent project. The common sense and common justice of the nation have revolted at a plan which is an outrage upon both. Mr. BRIGHT's agitation and his Bill have not been wholly in vain. They will serve to show the Government and the House of Commons what it is that the country does not wish and will not tolerate.

THE CASE OF THE "CHARLES ET GEORGES."

THE documents published by the Portuguese Government place before us the whole case of the *Charles et Georges* fully and clearly. Portugal may point with triumph to the folio volume which records how consistently she acted, and how badly she was treated. It is rare indeed that in international disputes one of the disputants is so wholly in the wrong, and the other so wholly in the right. Portugal has the satisfaction of proving to the world that justice was as indisputably on her side as force was on that of France. For Englishmen, however, the all-important point is to decide whether the treatment of our oldest ally by the DERBY Cabinet was in any way defensible. There may possibly be documents that Lord MALMSESBURY can produce, which will change or modify the judgment to which the Portuguese documents will lead every impartial reader; but this is very improbable; and we find all that we can wish to know so amply set out in the bulky Portuguese Blue-book that hesitation is impossible. In the outrage to which her faithful ally was subjected, England received an affront such as has very seldom been offered to her; and that such an affront should have been borne meekly and

humblly by the Ministers of an English Sovereign, is without a parallel in the modern history of the country.

The main facts of the case may be told very briefly. About four years ago some of the principal inhabitants of the Island of Réunion applied to the Portuguese Government for permission to import free colonists from the Portuguese possessions on the east coast of Africa. A similar application was made, nearly at the same time, from the English settlement of the Mauritius. The Portuguese Government communicated with France and England, and while the French Government urged the Portuguese to grant the request, the English Government not only prohibited the landing of free colonists in the Mauritius, but urged Portugal to issue a general order forbidding the emigration of colonists from their African possessions. The Portuguese had only one object—to please England; and as England wished, so it was done. A general order was issued; but practically it was not very easy to get this order carried into operation. The Governor of Mozambique connived at the exportation of these colonists. He was therefore recalled, and his successor was sent out with the strictest injunctions to prevent this system of emigration under any pretext and in any form. England watched the course of events with a jealous eye. If there was any laxity, she wrote in the strongest language, ordering rather than advising greater strictness. When greater strictness was introduced, she thanked and complimented Portugal for the energy displayed. It was in vain that the French Government argued in despatch after despatch that the system in question was unobjectionable. Portugal held on steadily in the path marked out for her by England, and she obtained an express acknowledgment from the French Government that the local authorities in Réunion, and the French naval force stationed in the adjoining waters, had been informed that the system of obtaining free colonists for French settlements was absolutely forbidden throughout the Portuguese settlements in Africa.

But the system was too lucrative to be easily abandoned by the French settlers, who were perfectly aware of the difference in opinion between their own Government and the Portuguese. More than one ship was seized, fitted as a slaver, within the forbidden waters. But the Portuguese Government contented itself with letting the ship go, after having exacted from the captain and the delegate on board a formal promise not to renew the attempt. On the 21st of November, 1857, however, a case occurred of a more serious character. The English Consul informed the Mozambique authorities that there was a vessel in Portuguese waters supposed to be taking in slaves. A Portuguese vessel of war was sent to visit the French ship, and found on board her forty negroes who had been just shipped from the Portuguese coast. Eleven of these had their arms tied, and they all asserted that they had not come on board of their own free will. If ever a clear case could arise for making an example, it had arisen now. The offence was complete. Not only was the ship fitted as a slaver, and taken in waters which were forbidden to all ships whatever, but Portuguese subjects had been shipped on board her against their will. This ship, which proved to be the *Charles et Georges*, Captain ROUXEL, of St. Malo, was taken to Mozambique, where the Governor appointed a Special Commission to inquire into the circumstances, and decide whether the case ought to be handed over to the judicial tribunals. The Commission decided that there was a *prima facie* case against the *Charles et Georges*, and in due time a judicial tribunal pronounced a sentence by which the ship was condemned to be sold by public auction, and Captain ROUXEL was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

The captain protested in various forms against the sentence; and in a series of letters to the Governor of Mozambique, he invented or adopted several grounds of defence. To all these the Portuguese, when the time came to discuss the question with France, had a ready answer. The captain denied that at the time of his capture he was in Portuguese waters. The Portuguese produced a statement to the contrary, from the officer in command of the *Zambese*, and urged that a Portuguese naval officer might be reasonably supposed to know the locality better than a trading foreigner. The captain produced a permission from the chief of a native tribe, authorising the embarkation of the negroes. The Portuguese Government replied that the native chief had no authority whatever to give the permission, and that it was impossible that the captain could honestly think that this sheik had authority for what he had done. Not only was the express refusal of the Government to permit the egress of

colonists under any circumstances generally notorious, but it was well known to the delegate on board the *Charles et Georges*. The Portuguese brought forward the evidence of this delegate himself, who said that he was aware the captain was violating the law in what he did, and that he should have thought it necessary to report this breach of duty to the authorities of Réunion. This statement of the delegate did away with the whole ground on which the French Government impugned the conduct of the Portuguese. Count WALEWSKI urged that to condemn under the Slave-trade laws a French vessel bearing a French Government official was tantamount to accusing the French Government of taking part in the Slave-trade. The Portuguese reply seems to us unanswerable. Neither the French Government nor the French official had anything to do with the alleged offence, which was committed by the captain of a trading vessel in defiance of the rules laid down by the French Government, and in defiance of the authority of the official placed on board his ship. That a private trader, who was a subject of France, should be convicted, on the clearest evidence, of having engaged in the Slave-trade, could not possibly be considered as a general imputation on the French Government.

The French Government, however, would not listen to reason. It was in vain that the Portuguese objected that the matter was in the hands of the Court of Appeal, and that they could not interfere with the constitutional tribunals of the country. The French insisted on the ship being given up, and on Captain ROUXEL being indemnified. The Portuguese then appealed to the Treaty of Paris. Count WALEWSKI had himself proposed the clause providing for the reference to mediation of all disputes between European Powers. He had invited Portugal to adhere to the principles of mediation which the Treaty had established. But when he was invited to refer a matter in which he was himself interested to mediation, he scornfully rejected the proposal. As the Portuguese Minister took the liberty to observe, in a despatch to the French Government, the only answer France would give was that she was a Power of the first order, and Portugal was very weak. The English Government was appealed to by the ally who had acted throughout under English instructions, and Lord MALMSESBURY instructed Lord COWLEY to do what he could for the Portuguese. But the Cabinet of the EMPEROR appreciated at its true value this feeble attempt to obtain a compromise, and no attention was paid to Lord COWLEY's entreaties. Lord MALMSESBURY then telegraphed to Mr. HOWARD, the English Minister at Lisbon, directing him to recommend the Portuguese to give way if there had been informabilities during or after the capture. When, accordingly, before yielding, the Portuguese Government asked Mr. HOWARD what, in his opinion, ought to be done, he advised the Portuguese to give way, because he, Mr. HOWARD, fancied that there was some ground for supposing that the captain might have thought the native chief who sold the slaves to ROUXEL really had authority to do so. He proceeded to intimate that no assistance was to be expected from England. If the present demand of France was rejected, a more serious demand would be made, and then the Portuguese could not help giving way. Mr. HOWARD, like the French Government, had no answer to give but that France was a Power of the first order.

Unfortunately, his answer also proclaimed that, in the opinion of the Cabinet which he represented, England was not a Power of the first order. The Portuguese did not affect to overlook that England had deserted her ally from fear of France. Since the Portuguese Cortes have met, the Government has had to justify its conduct, and it fell to the lot of the Minister of Marine, whose office answers to that of our Secretary for the Colonies, to state the case on behalf of the Cabinet of which he is a member. He had been asked why a demand for assistance was not made to England. He replied that it was no use, as the English Government was evidently on such terms of intimacy with the French that whatever France wished was done by England, and, besides, England had a hundred thousand of her soldiers in India. What could a weak country like England do against a great Power like France? We are not aware that such a thing has ever before been said of England within the memory of any one now living. A Minister of an allied State which has got into trouble simply from obeying our directions, announces that England is unwilling and afraid to help in the hour of need. It remains for Lord MALMSESBURY to reckon with the English Parliament. Will the House of Com-

mons really accept the stain that has tarnished the honour of the country? Is it possible that the nation which was so loud in its denunciation of the Emperor of RUSSIA will endure a violation of all the principles of right and of international law to which the seizure of the Principalities was a trifle? Can the nation that has poured out its blood and treasure like water in order to suppress the Slave-trade bear that a small State should be outraged for having, at the instigation of England, endeavoured to aid in the work? Can England bear this patiently and meekly simply because that great Power, France, says that might shall triumph over right?

MANIFEST DESTINY.

THERE is a certain candour and simplicity in the conduct of American politicians which offers an agreeable contrast to the complications of European diplomacy. The confidential suggestions of European courtiers are exempt from publicity, and Sovereigns as well as statesmen are supposed not unfrequently to use language for the express purpose of concealing their thoughts. The American Demus expresses his wishes in the face of day, and his favourites are even more anxious to divine and stimulate his appetites than to provide the satisfaction which he requires. Mr. BUCHANAN's public proposal to purchase Cuba seems to have been intended rather to illustrate his own patriotic cupidity than to facilitate a bargain which could only have been carried out in the strictest secrecy. AHAB never provoked NABOTH to announce in the presence of all the inhabitants of Jezreel his determination not to part with his hereditary vineyard. The protest of the Havanah municipality against the project of selling them like a drove of slaves would excite stronger sympathies if their illustration were not so immediately drawn from their own daily practice. The unfortunate negroes have as little to lose as to gain by annexation, and the renewal of the African Slave-trade on the coast of Georgia leaves it in doubt whether American or Spanish domination is more incompatible with the interests of humanity. As, however, the PRESIDENT seems to be satisfied with a verbal defiance of international law, there is no immediate reason for speculating on the comparative merits of the American dialect of English and "the beautiful language of Cervantes." Mr. BUCHANAN's declining popularity must be attributed not so much to his abstinence from aggression as to the habitual working of the Federal Constitution. As more than half the interval between the Presidential elections has already passed, the Democratic party take more interest in the pretensions and promises of future candidates than in a leader who has already served their turn. A New Orleans journal attributes Mr. BUCHANAN's alleged tameness in negotiation to a species of influence which has not generally been supposed to affect American politics. The continuance of the BULWER-CLAYTON treaty has, it seems, been secured by the control which an English lady has established over an elderly gentleman well known to be hard-headed, and not hitherto reputed to be especially soft-hearted. The same theory will hardly account, however, for the mortifying failure of the piratical expedition to Nicaragua. The Filibusters have been wrecked in the Bay of Honduras, and an English vessel which rescued the crew has courteously accommodated them with a passage back to Mobile. Before the money for a new invasion has been subscribed, it may be hoped that Sir W. G. OUSELEY's mission to Central America will have reached a satisfactory conclusion.

Mr. DOUGLAS, the only ostensible candidate for the succession to the Presidency, naturally appeals to the popular feeling in favour of unlimited annexation, while, as a prudent politician, he abstains from any definite promise of spoliation. The Americans, in truth, are not so much bent on the acquisition of superfluous territory as they are anxious to convince themselves and the world at large that they will seize the property of their neighbours whenever they want it. Manifest destiny means defiance of external interference and absolute superiority to moral scruples. The principle once established, Mr. DOUGLAS himself recommends a process of gradual deglutition. For the present he admits that the Union has territory enough, and an aggrandizing policy contingent on the gradual increase of population offers no practical ground of alarm. Even on the question of Cuba, he will only pledge himself to resist the interference of foreign European Powers whenever the interest of the United States may render the seizure of the island expedient. The feeble Governments of the Central

and Southern Continent are to be supported, and even strengthened, until the time arrives for the absorption of their dominions. As they are wanted, they will be first Americanized, and then successively annexed, but in the meantime humanity and commercial prudence alike suggest that the victim should be fattened for the slaughter. The only remarkable characteristic of the popular policy consists in the ostentation with which it is avowed in the hearing of those who are menaced with protection and extinction. Even the lamb, according to the poet, if he had the reason of his owner, would not sport and play, and there are many politicians between the frontier of Texas and Cape Horn who are sufficiently gifted with reason to read and understand the speeches of American patriots. Mr. DOUGLAS is perhaps justified in boasting of the foresight with which he opposed the self-denying provisions of the BULWER-CLAYTON Treaty; but seven or eight years make up a large portion of American history, and the democrats of the present day forget how recently their party assumed the attitude of friends and patrons of the Spanish Republics, which were then supposed to be threatened by British ambition. The MONROE doctrine, which now means a reversionary right to half a world, was not long since little more than an argument against the anomalous Mosquito Protectorate. Only sagacious observers like Mr. DOUGLAS understood that promises of support to Nicaragua were merely assertions of the exclusive right to appropriate the territory of the State.

Blustering politicians, like dogs whose bark is worse than their bite, are troublesome, though they are comparatively harmless. If American orators would be content to abstain from proclaiming their defiant contempt for international law, their real policy would be generally found in accordance with common sense, and especially with the interests of England. A population considerably smaller than that of the United Kingdom will not become more formidable by diffusing itself over a Continent, and still less is any danger to be apprehended from a succession of verbal encroachments. Nor is there any reason why England should deprecate the future greatness of the United States. There is much reason in Mr. DOUGLAS's argument that the distance which excluded America from the Congress of Paris deprives Europe of a natural right of interference in the relations of the States of the West. The real danger of annexation affects neither England nor France, but it does very seriously affect the unity of a Federation which has only been devised for the purpose of incorporating homogeneous elements.

On the other hand, the aspirations of American patriots for the possessions of their neighbours must condescend to confine themselves to a Southern direction. The destiny which may be manifest in Nicaragua is altogether apocryphal when it attempts to turn its face to British Columbia; and although it may be too much to expect that the Government of Washington should employ gentlemen as its agents in English dependencies, its nominees must reserve their characteristic impudence for more congenial climates. It appears that a Mr. NUGENT, who has held some quasi-official position among the American miners on the Fraser River, is not satisfied with the manners of authorities who, as he says, are accustomed only to savages, or with the administration of a Government not elected by the patent ballot-box of San Francisco. Whether a Californian digger's hut or an Indian wigwam is the best school of politeness, is a question which may admit of various answers; but Governor DOUGLAS will assuredly not surrender his authority to Vigilance Committees, or allow the rights of his countrymen to be overborne by organized gangs of American rowdies. The audacity of a petty official in menacing England with the resentment of his Government proves rather his own defective breeding than the ill-will of his superiors; but it cannot be too fully understood that the liberties which may be taken with Cuba or Mexico are altogether inapplicable to the possessions of England.

In a few months the politicians of the Union will have domestic questions to deal with of sufficient importance to occupy their attention. At the last election, an unknown candidate would have defeated the champion of Democracy if two or three Northern States had joined the new Republican party. Since that time, the Opposition has secured a majority in Congress, and, in default of some unexpected political change, Mr. BUCHANAN's successor will represent an Anti-slavery policy. The opinions, however, of the President are but of secondary importance, in comparison with the geographical division of parties which will be exhibited in the triumph of a Republican candidate over the unanimous

repugnance of the South. Thoughtful patriots have agreed with demagogues in deprecating the sectional contest which is found at every successive election to approach with more inevitable certainty. It may have been in the hope of averting a great public danger that Mr. DOUGLAS lately seceded from his party on the question of recognising the Lecompton Constitution of Kansas, but it is still doubtful whether any of the Northern States will support in 1860 the former nominee of the Pro-slavery Democracy. The progress of a sectional conflict can only tend to develop the national supremacy of the free and thriving Northern States. The supporters of Slavery have been abler, bolder, and more efficiently organized, but the real resources of the North are incalculably greater. Yet all wise politicians are aware that the definitive triumph of the Free States would produce as its immediate result the dissolution of the Union. The best friends of America still deprecate the predominance of the Republican party; and if foreigners were entitled to any voice in questions altogether domestic, Englishmen at least ought to know that the bitterest maligners of their country have always been found among the Abolitionists of the North.

A CHANNEL FLEET.

THE pacific tidings which have followed last week's rumours of war—unsatisfactory and uncertain as they are—are almost more humiliating than the menaces with which the French EMPEROR experimented on the temper of Austria and her allies. One day he utters a few petulant or calculated words, and the shadow of threatening war clouds every capital, fills diplomatists with eager anxiety, and disturbs the whole course of commerce. Our own funds fall more suddenly than they did on the proclamation of war with Russia, or even on the first startling news of the Indian mutiny. Every railway company feels the Imperial influence in the depression of its stock, and the value of shares in the Italian lines is for the moment almost annihilated. A few days later, NAPOLEON permits it to be whispered that he has changed his mind, and inclines to peace. The tone of his Ministers is altered. The great regard which the EMPEROR feels for the peace of Europe is intimated to remonstrant allies. The *Times* announces that the apathy of France has checkmated the ambition of its chief. The funds rise on every Bourse, and the world understands that there is to be no war. Why is it that the issues of peace and war hang thus upon the breath of one unscrupulous man? Diplomatic complications have occurred often enough when France was under other Governments than that of our faithful ally; but England was not disturbed by the frown or restored to complacency by the smile of any foreign Sovereign. It has at other times been our part to look on at the tangle of Continental politics, not indeed with indifference, but with the coolness of spectators who are conscious of the power to stand safely aloof from any contest that does not concern them, and to choose their own time for taking part in struggles that may call for their intervention. Why is England so agitated now by the mere hint of a rupture between France and Austria? A score of plausible answers may be given; yet there is one that is felt more than spoken, but which all secretly acknowledge to be the true explanation of the uneasiness that has been so prevalent. France is prepared for war, and England is not; and in the presence of a neighbour ready, unscrupulous, and armed to the teeth, it is the extreme of folly to fancy ourselves secure. We do not desire to propagate alarm, and it is gratifying to see that no tinge of fear minglest with the anxiety which every prudent man feels to see the forces of this country put on such a footing as to restore to us the vantage of our insular position. It is mere vapouring to say that we retain it at this moment. We may have superiority enough to win a victory, but we have not the supremacy which is proof against attack.

If war were declared to-morrow, no one can say that the first cannon might not be fired in an attack upon one of our own arsenals. If the existence of England depended on it, we could not for weeks, nor perhaps for months, institute an effective blockade of Cherbourg or Toulon. Until ships came swarming home from distant stations the Channel would not be ours, and who can say what mischief might ensue while the unready forces of England were being collected to encounter the fleets that are always prepared to issue from the ports of France? It may be that, for the present, the EMPEROR means peace, as probably a fortnight ago he had more than half decided upon war. But our tran-

quillity ought not to depend on speculations such as these. The seeming caprice which he has shown may not improbably be a repetition of the deliberate policy by which he won his throne. In the last days of the Republic, rumours were constantly set afloat of contemplated attacks by the PRESIDENT on the liberty of the Assembly; and again and again was the public mind reassured by solemn declarations that the PRINCE would be faithful to his oath. The cry of "wolf" was repeated till men learned to laugh at the danger, and then the time was come for the *coup d'état* which had been so long and so stealthily prepared. If repeated alarms of war, followed by peaceful assurances, should lull the Powers of Europe in like manner to sleep, they too may be awakened at last by some outrage as sudden and unscrupulous as that by which the liberties of France were sacrificed. Three times within a year have threatening demonstrations been made—first against England, then, with more success, against Portugal, and more recently against Austria. Swiftness in action, and dissimulation in word, are the special characteristics of Napoleonic policy. Dissimulation, it is true, may easily be met by courteous distrust, and swiftness of attack will not endanger those who are constantly prepared.

It is grievous that an attitude of armed watchfulness should be the only one possible for prudent States; but while one pretext after another is found for increasing the armaments of France, it needs a higher character for veracity than the French EMPEROR enjoys to beget a lively faith in the sincerity of peaceful professions made by the master of 400,000 bayonets, and of fleet scarcely, if at all, inferior to our own. The army need not trouble us much, if it were twice as large, but even if LOUIS NAPOLEON were the most high-minded of princes, the strength to which his navy has attained has rendered it the duty of England, in common prudence, to shelter herself behind her natural bulwark—a Channel Fleet. We do not believe that the additional expenditure for such a purpose need be considerable; but let the cost be what it may, it will be a trifling premium to pay for absolute immunity from all attack. Twenty sail actually in commission, supported by the force of gunboats that could be rapidly got ready for sea as they were wanted, would leave us little to fear from any quarter. The Channel would be our own, whatever course the affairs of Europe might take; and it is not impossible that, by maintaining a home fleet, England would contribute more effectually to the preservation of peace abroad than by flattering the caprices or adopting the policy of the present occupant of the Tuilleries. It is not merely the possibility of sudden danger that renders a Channel Fleet essential to the efficiency of our navy. Unwilling as we may be to admit it, it is notorious that the QUEEN's service is not popular among seamen. Whatever scheme the Commission on the manning of the Navy may suggest, we have at present no compulsory means of securing crews for the fleet, nor have we succeeded in tempting the better class of sailors to prefer a frigate to a merchantman. It is not very astonishing that able seamen, who can double their wages by shifting from the navy to the ships of any of the great mail lines, should demand their discharge on the very day that their period of service expires. At the existing rates of pay, the most surprising thing is that any sailors should be induced to ship on board of a man-of-war, when they can command much higher pay in the merchant service, or in the American navy. Unless some kind of conscription is established, there are but two ways of securing a ready supply of sailors. One is by a very considerable increase of wages, and the other by the permanent maintenance of a large body of men either actually afloat or under obligations to serve when wanted.

So far as the mere question of manning the navy is concerned, the object might no doubt be attained by either method, but it is not improbable that the entire cost of an effective Channel Fleet kept constantly in commission would be less than that of raising the scale of pay sufficiently to give to the navy the command of the market. As a mere matter of economy, therefore, the policy of keeping up a Channel Fleet may be the best that could be adopted; and it will, we trust, come to be considered as much a matter of course to garrison the Channel at all times with our ships as to man the fortifications of Dover or Portsmouth. But the present urgency is not to be measured by these general considerations alone. While French policy is what it is, and the French navy what it is, we need a powerful Channel Fleet, not merely to improve the general organization of the navy, but as an ever ready protection

against risks to which England need not and should not be exposed. The material support of an irresistible force in the narrow seas is as necessary for our own safety as for the dignity of our foreign policy, and if there be any truth in the rumour that a considerable addition to the Navy Estimates is in contemplation, it may be inferred that Ministers have resolved to leave our shores no longer in their present defenceless state. For once, the wisest course will be also the most popular, and Lord DERBY will consult the interests of his party no less than those of the country by placing England once more in absolute security behind the guns of a Channel Fleet.

MR. ROEBUCK ON PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

THE only conspicuous member of Parliament who has recently addressed his constituents as an "advanced" Reformer seems by no means enthusiastic in support of Mr. BRIGHT, whose name and whose recent agitation he forgets to mention. Mr. ROEBUCK is of course pledged to all the commonplaces of Reform, and he would possibly not have objected to undertake the conduct of the ultra-Liberal movement; but neither his temper nor his turn of mind inclines him to echo the mischievous fallacies of more prominent and successful demagogues. Mr. ROEBUCK has fallen short of a great position through a certain restlessness and instability, and more especially through a deficiency of seasonable reserve. Like Mr. DRUMMOND, he has made it his business to say what others were sometimes afraid, and sometimes too considerate, to utter; and the merit of proclaiming unpopular truths has scarcely balanced the inconvenience which attended a constant disregard of conventional prudence. Nevertheless, political courage is so rare a virtue that the pride of intellect which supports it deserves to be recognised and applauded, although daring may sometimes degenerate into superfluous bravado. Ill-timed declamations against foreign Governments might be attributed to a vulgar desire for safe notoriety, if the same speaker had not repeatedly shown his readiness to bear the prejudices of the public assemblies on which his popularity and his hopes of power depend. The preconceived opinions of a public meeting at Sheffield are probably represented with sufficient accuracy in the dull and servile cant with which heavy Mr. HADFIELD concluded the business of the evening. Many of the working cutlers, indeed, must be far superior to their local member in ability, but their constitutional studies have been confined to one side of the question, and when they hear that the population of the Tower Hamlets outnumbers two-hundredfold that of Radnor and Droitwich, they are not likely to remember that Sir CORNEWALL LEWIS and Sir JOHN PAKINGTON contribute as efficiently to the good government of the country as Mr. BUTLER and Mr. AYRTON. The wealth of Marylebone suggests to a different class of reasoners the inexpediency of maintaining and extending the actual disfranchisement of those who possess it; but Mr. HADFIELD and his constituents are satisfied with the common formula, that the population which is always found in juxtaposition with property furnishes an argument in favour of the exclusive representation of numbers. It is to the credit of the Sheffield meeting that the vote of thanks which rewarded these deferential platitudes was extended to the colleague who had by anticipation contradicted and ridiculed every proposition in Mr. HADFIELD's speech. If multitudes enjoy the eager assentation of their numerous flatterers, they are sometimes not incapable of appreciating the worthier compliment which is conveyed in a sincere and independent appeal to their reason. It is true that Mr. ROEBUCK verbally adopted almost all the articles of the democratic creed; but an orator who informs his audience that the measure which he professes to advocate is at the same time unattainable and of secondary importance, is understood both by friends and enemies not to be an enthusiastic advocate of the cause.

It is perhaps fortunate that Mr. ROEBUCK is not more in earnest, as the plan of reform which he throws out in the course of his speech strongly resembles Mr. BRIGHT'S. If he has not altogether succeeded in clearing his mind of cant, he has made some approach to that desirable result by discarding the conventional reasons for the popular conclusions which he languidly adopts. As to the inalienable right of every human being to the suffrage, Mr. ROEBUCK cannot even understand the pretension; and he points out, with supererogatory force, the inconvenience of including women and babies in the Parliamentary constituency. In supporting a

rating franchise, he professes to believe that he is utterly destroying the power of the landed gentry, whom, nevertheless, he praises for the present use of their constitutional influence. The House of Commons, in the opinion of the reforming orator, already represents with sufficient accuracy the passions and opinions of the people; but, as it is necessary to devise some kind of reason for the proposed change, it is suggested that the interests of the non-electors are not as much regarded as their feelings and their fancies. The implied inference, that the delegates of the multitude will be more indifferent to the prejudices of their constituents, and, at the same time, more solicitous for their substantial interests, is surprising and unexpected; but Mr. ROEBUCK was desirous to convey to his Sheffield hearers as much truth as they would bear, and it was probably necessary to accept their established formulas, as MONTAIGNE always prefaces his more sceptical essays by elaborate assertions of his own comprehensive and unhesitating orthodoxy. After a sufficiently explicit confession of faith, it is natural and customary to explain that the articles of faith have no meaning, or, at least, that they can lead to no practical result. If Mr. ROEBUCK has scarcely earned the character of a statesman, he is a thoughtful and experienced politician, and he sufficiently understands the theory of Government to perceive that the constitution of electoral bodies is at best but a contrivance for the election of competent members of the House of Commons. The constituents of Mr. HADFIELD received an unexpected lesson when they were told that no multitude of votes will qualify a half-educated ordinary man of business to take a share in the Government of the country. The manufacturing districts and the metropolitan boroughs might long since have secured the preponderance which they demand by the simple process of selecting competent representatives of their opinions and wishes; but the illiterate attorneys and bankrupt undertakers of London are scarcely more incapable of public affairs than the respectable local magnates who have been generally chosen in the great centres of industry. Mr. ROEBUCK cannot seriously believe that education and ability will be more carefully sought after by constituencies who are lower in the social scale; but his immediate object was not so much to support a conclusion as to convey a useful warning. Although it will probably be impossible to deteriorate the character of the metropolitan constituencies, the increase in the number of their representatives can scarcely fail to lower the influence of the borough members in the House of Commons. With eight COXES representing a less select Finsbury, and three TOWNSENDS returned by a still more promiscuous Greenwich, any politician of average capacity, who may have the good fortune to command a county seat, will be on the high road to distinction and office.

Mr. ROEBUCK's contemptuous advocacy of the proposed change in the representative system reached a climax in his paradoxical prophecy that Parliamentary Reform would excite but a secondary interest during the ensuing session. One eminent Liberal at least is fully prepared to accept the challenge which despots and stockjobbers are continually threatening to publish. It is perhaps scarcely a sufficient cause for war that, in compliance with courtly etiquette, the Emperor of the FRENCH at Cherbourg saluted the Queen of ENGLAND; but Mr. ROEBUCK reasonably assumes that the spectacle of freedom is obnoxious to despots, and he hastily infers that the antagonism of French and English principles is likely at an early period to ferment into actual war. There is fortunately, however, a wide interval between unfriendly manifestations and the march of hostile armies. While England is averse to a contest which would be an unmixed evil, the French people shudder at the prospect of additional taxes and a more sweeping conscription; and the repugnance which has been exhibited to an unnecessary rupture with Austria would be still more universally felt if the far graver question arose of grappling with the formidable strength of England. The digression at Sheffield was only intended to signify that almost any political question was more urgent and more interesting than the agitation which the meeting was summoned to promote. It would be easy to point out inconsistencies in Mr. ROEBUCK's speech, nor can it be denied that some of his opinions and prognostications might have been sounder if they had been more popular; but large bodies of men are so incapable of independent thought, and so entirely at the mercy of political sophists, that a speaker who brings an unpalatable novelty within their knowledge can hardly fail to teach them some neglected truth.

THE KNIGHTS OF ST. PATRICK.

THE officials of the present Government are not happy in their "secret and confidential" proceedings. Whether it is a despatch for the encouragement of Ionian treason, or an inquiry into the ramifications of Irish conspiracy, whatever is meant to be concealed finds its way at once into the daily press. The revelations of the Belfast inquiry will not prove quite so awkward as the publication of Sir J. Young's despatch, though it would, perhaps, have aided the future proceedings of the police if the details of the approver's evidence had been withheld from the world. Such was, at any rate, the opinion of the Crown prosecutors; but, despite the unusual precaution of conducting the inquiry within the walls of the gaol, the Irish papers have been able to publish what has all the appearance of being a verbatim report of the proceedings. The particularity of the account, and the natural tone of the statements attributed to the witnesses, are enough to prove the genuineness of the narrative, which may be assumed to exhibit the real dimensions of the plot which has caused the Government so much uneasiness.

The secret society which has been detected in the North certainly appears to be a more serious affair than the Phoenix Clubs of Kerry. It is less exclusively political and proportionately more dangerous. Whether it is absolutely identical with the old Ribbon organization is not very clear; but, if so, it has renounced the notorious title, and assumed the suggestive appellation of "The Knights of St. Patrick Thrasher" Society." Who are the persons to be thrashed may be easily surmised, if it be true, as stated, that the rules are the same as those used in the Ribbon Society, and that strict proof of hereditary Roman Catholicism is the condition of admission into the brotherhood. The oath taken on joining the Society points rather to private crime than to general insurrection. The gist of it is, that each member binds himself "to take part in any quarrel in which a brother "may be engaged"—which may possibly signify to shoot down any Protestant with whose proceedings the brother may not be pleased. If this be the real character of the association, no measures for its suppression can be too stringent, for however safe the country may be against attempts at insurrection, it may be doubted whether the prevalent feeling on the subject of homicide is sound enough to resist the seductions of an assassination club. But, in justice to the Thrashers, it should be remembered in their favour that, although they are said to have been organized for a considerable time, and to number at least thirteen lodges, which seem to have been pretty well attended, there is no allegation of their having been concerned in any act of violence. If this is really Ribbonism, it is a very mild form of the disease, and there are some indications which imply that the associates, after all, like their brethren in the South, are only bent on gratifying their nationality by affecting to be traitors. The secret pass-words betray the genuine style of old-fashioned Irish rebellion. The brother introduces himself by the gratifying announcement, "We expect a war between England and "France," and the answer of the initiated is, "The Irish "Brigade is on the advance." This is only a concrete form of O'CONNELL's favourite maxim, "England's difficulty is "Ireland's opportunity"—a sentiment which sank too deep into the Irish heart to be obliterated in less than a generation. The ballads of a people are said to have more influence than their laws; but their proverbs sway them with greater power than either. The leaven of those pithy sayings by which O'CONNELL insinuated the disaffection which he kept so well in hand, may work for many years to come, while the fiery war-songs of the Young Irelanders are already quite forgotten. But it is neither surprising nor alarming to find that the character of Ireland still retains some traces of the mould into which it was cast during the Repeal agitation. It would be very strange if this were not so, and though one may regret the cynical feeling which exults over English disaster and sympathizes even with Sepoys, it would be a grievous mistake to treat these shadows of the past as if they were symptoms of future trouble.

It would be very reassuring to believe that the Belfast Society was merely political, but there is much to suggest a more serious estimate, and even among the pass words where the warlike tone is most decided there are some which were evidently inspired by a different feeling. "The clouds are rather dark," is a very innocent salutation; but the rejoinder, "As dark as heresy," which proclaims the speaker one of St. Patrick's Thrashers, is more ominous, and will, no doubt, be accepted in some quar-

ters as conclusive evidence of the bloodthirsty designs of the confederates. To say the least of it, it has an ugly sound, and recalls the doings of Whiteboys and Defenders more vividly than can be agreeable to timid Protestants. Possibly, on further investigation, the conspiracy will prove to be a combination of emasculated Ribbonism with traditional disloyalty, and though we cannot persuade ourselves to dread the uprising of a rebel army, we dare not speak lightly of any organization which aims at a revival of religious animosity or agrarian outrage. Until the co-operation of the people at large can be relied on for the detection of crime, there is no safeguard against violence but such as is furnished by the activity of the police. In Ireland—as the escape of DELANY has recently shown—the peasantry are not as yet even neutral between the law and the criminal. Except by the strength of its organization, the Executive would have no chance of success against such odds; and experience has proved over and over again that, if terrorism is allowed on its side to organize itself, its supporters may be more than a match for the detectives. There is, however, one subject for congratulation to be found in the evidence that has been obtained. From a statement elicited on the cross-examination of the approver, it would seem that the Roman Catholic clergy are opposed to the movement. The respectable gentleman who informed against the boys of the Phoenix Club ascribed his own repentance to the influence of one Father JOHN, rather than to the temptation of the Government reward. But the witness was scarcely trustworthy, and Father JOHN might, besides, be a solitary exception. The testimony of the Belfast prisoners to a similar effect is much more convincing. Judging from the tone of the cross-examination by one of the prisoners, it must have been notorious among them that the priests refused the rites of the Church to members of the Society—a course which might once have sufficed to put down a Roman Catholic conspiracy. But the influence of the clergy has waned of late, and was never so powerful for repression as they were themselves apt to represent. However, if they may not be very strong as allies, they would be very formidable as opponents; and the task of rooting out these gangs of Ribbonmen—if such they be—will be all the easier when their own Church repudiates the self-elected champions of Catholicism and crime.

Even if the gloomiest view of the case be taken, it would have been wiser to use the ordinary means of repression without startling society by the issue of an alarming proclamation. Its evil fruits are beginning even now to ripen. Already a counter-combination of landlords and magistrates is set on foot to combat enemies who have not yet made themselves felt. The manifesto published by these gentlemen might be very proper if it were true that agrarian violence was again rampant in Ireland. But it is not quite certain that the crimes which first gave rise to the cry of Ribbonism had anything to do with secret societies or agrarian disputes; and there is no reason to believe that the ordinary machinery of the law is less capable than usual of preserving general tranquillity. If special proclamations and special commissions are scarcely warranted by the gravity of the danger, still less has the time come for such changes in the administration of justice as the Landlords' Association is anxious to bring about. Some of the measures by which it is proposed to secure repose are quite as likely to lead to disturbance; but it will be early enough to canvass the details of the landlords' propositions for the amendment of the law when the necessity for any alteration at all shall have actually arisen. The existing powers have sufficed to undermine a little nest of societies before any mischief has—so far as can be ascertained—resulted from the conspiracy; and we do not know what more could be done under the severer system of police which it is desired to introduce. The social state of Ireland is not, perhaps, entirely sound, but remedies adopted under the influence of panic are likely to prove worse than the disease.

ENGLISH COMPOSITION.

ONE or two letters which have appeared in the *Times* in the course of the last fortnight, upon the subject of the extreme scarcity of good English composition, suggest questions of very great importance to every one who is connected with any of the branches—high or low—of English education. How is it that people write bad English? Why should they not learn to write good English? The first step towards an answer to these questions lies in the answer to another. What is good English? Good English, we should reply, means, first, grammatical language—secondly, plain language—and thirdly, pure language.

Good English is entirely distinct both from good sense and from truth. It is a definite thing, which may—though it seldom does—co-exist with any amount of wickedness and stupidity. The most atrocious blasphemy, the most revolting filth, the most wearisome, incoherent nonsense are as capable of being expressed in perfectly good English as the Lord's Prayer or the Ten Commandments. The reason why people do not write good English in this sense of the words is, because hardly any one is ever expressly taught to do so. It may be said that in public schools, themes and Latin verses form a regular part of the instruction given, and this is no doubt true. It is also true, that at both the Universities, and especially at Oxford, considerable attention is paid to composition, not only in Greek and Latin, but also in English; and we, at least, do not dispute the truth of the opinion, that the best of all modes of teaching English grammar is that of training a lad who is accustomed to converse in his own language with educated people to write Greek or Latin with critical accuracy. The education of the higher classes in composition appears to us to fail rather in the result aimed at than in the means employed to produce it. People always confound together the different objects of teaching boys to write and teaching them to think. The first is, indeed, a most useful, and, in some walks of life, perhaps an indispensable, introduction to the second; but when an attempt is made to attain the two objects by one process, the pupil is almost sure to be baffled and puzzled. Almost all school exercises in composition—so far as our experience goes—err in this particular. They are not intended simply to teach boys to write good English or good Latin; nor do they ever suggest to boys in general that there is any definite way of writing which deserves to be called good—that there are positive merits and positive faults of style which are quite independent of beauty of language or of thought. The first thing which most schoolmasters aim at, after they have drilled their pupils in the technicalities of grammar, is to give them a certain knack of producing a composition of a given length, marked with a sort of neatness both of thought and language, which may be seen in the highest possible degree of perfection in some of Addison's papers in the *Spectator*. This is accomplished by proposing subjects for composition and models for imitation. A boy is told to learn Ovid or Horace by heart, or to translate and re-translate passages from Cicero's Letters, till, as the phrase is, he catches the style. He is always led to look upon style, not as a matter subject to rules of scientific accuracy and rigour, but as an affair of taste, closely allied to delicacy of conception and quickness of sensibility. For lads remarkable for the degree in which they possess these last-mentioned gifts, such a training is no doubt well adapted; and we could mention some of the greatest living masters of style who attained their skill in it by these means. Delicacy and sensibility are, however, the characteristics of a minority. It is as impossible for the great mass of lads to learn to write well by imitation as it would be for them to learn to play on the piano by ear solely, and without the use of notes. A rougher and more definite mode of proceeding is generally required; and that rough and definite mode is little understood, and, as far as we know, never practised.

A boy who is perfectly incapable of producing any—even the smallest—amount of elegant composition, either in poetry or in prose, may yet be taught to write a plain statement of facts with propriety and accuracy; and when he has learnt to do so, he will be master of a most useful, and not a very common, accomplishment—an accomplishment of which many elegant writers are altogether destitute. The solicitor who conveyed to the world, through the columns of the *Times*, his experience of the fact that hardly any one can write a clear and full letter about matters of business—that men distinguished at the Universities by no means form an exception to this rule—and that the correspondence of the clergy furnishes the most striking illustrations of its working—stated facts as to which almost every competent witness would confirm him. A pretentious habit of feeling is one of the great causes of bad English in the present day. The impression on the minds of a vast proportion of those who address the public is that, if they are to write at all, they must write something smart. The truth is, that the value of anything that is said is exactly measured by the importance of its matter; and style can do no more than set that matter in its proper light. If a man wants to say that he got up at seven and breakfasted at eight, all the poets and philosophers that ever lived could not express the fact better than is done in the humble words which we have just used. If he is a poet, and wishes to employ the most delicate and fanciful imagery, it is still true that all that style can do is to bring out the thought as clearly as possible. What can exceed the delicate fancy of such lines as these?

Arethusa arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceanum mountains;
From cloud and from crag,
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains,
She leaped down the rocks,
With her diamond locks
Streaming among the streams;
Her path paved with green
The downward ravine,
As it slopes to the western gleams.

The thoughts are rare and refined to the last degree; but the words are mere vehicles, and might have been used by any one; and it

is in the fact that the graceful thoughts are exactly expressed by the plainest words that the beauty of the composition lies. Given the thoughts that a stream is to be described as a nymph descending a mountain, that the spray is to be compared to hair made of diamonds, that the water-course is to be the nymph's path, and that the greenness of the turf along its banks is to be described as green paving—it would be impossible to express them with greater simplicity and plainness than Shelley actually employed. His mind was occupied with nymphs, diamonds, and the like, just as a policeman's mind is occupied with thieves and drunkards; and there is no reason why each should not attain an equal mastery of style in their respective provinces. The art of fitting the words to the thoughts is as much open to the policeman as to the poet. "I saw the prosecutor walking down the street. He was very drunk. The prisoner pushed him down, pulled his watch out of his pocket, and ran away," is in point of style quite as good as the poem about *Arethusa*. Whether the material is silk or a sow's ear, it is equally capable of being cut into a regular figure.

The thoughts of a boy at school are seldom worth the trouble of being expressed, and we entertain considerable doubts as to the wisdom of attempting to induce boys to fancy that they think before they really do so. Dr. Arnold's celebrated practice of attempting to make the Rugby boys compose themes which should really exercise their mental powers, and not be mere strings of commonplaces, consisting principally of variations on the old tune of *Virtus est bona res*, always seemed to us to be of questionable expediency. The real workings of a boy's mind, by which his future character is formed, come out, not in school tasks, but in his intercourse with his friends. Those less ambitious exercises in mere style which practically formed the staple of the composition of other public schools aimed, we think, at an object far more attainable, though the method which they chose was fit only for a very few very peculiar minds. The real way to teach boys to write well would be to give them letters, extracts from histories, stories from the newspapers—anything containing plenty of facts—and set them to make out from those materials a clear and simple statement of the subject-matter to which they refer. A man who can write a good *précis* has mastered the fundamental principles of English composition. He has learned all that mere teaching can give him. Philosophy, reflection, grace, imagination, fancy—all that makes writings intrinsically valuable—he will have to find for himself, but when he has found them he will know where to put them.

It is one of the most curious subjects in the world for speculation to inquire what are the causes of the difficulty which people find in writing well. It would lead us far beyond our limits to examine many of them, but we are convinced that the great difficulty of all is the incompleteness with which we think on all ordinary occasions. This incompleteness is so far from being matter of regret or reproach that it is absolutely essential to the transaction of any kind of business whatever. Life is not long enough to think out all the bearings of every subject, and if in conversation people always went on the supposition that the persons to whom they talked would take for granted nothing that was not expressly stated, conversation would become a standing nuisance and grievance. Half the mistakes which occur in writing arise from forgetfulness of the distinction between writing and speaking. A person who is accustomed to settle his business by word of mouth with *bond fide* interlocutors, is almost sure to forget, when he has to write—especially if his correspondent does not wish to understand more than he can help of what is addressed to him—that his usual habit is to leave the greater part of his communications to be inferred from the expression of his face, the tone of his voice, the general purport of his conversation, and so forth. In the case of the College authorities at Cambridge, who gave notice that "Chapel would begin at ten on Monday morning, and continue till further notice," it was obvious that incompleteness of thought was the occasion of their absurdity. Probably no human being doubted for a moment what they meant, and if the statement had been made in words, and not in writing, it would have attracted no sort of attention. Probably if the notice had been simply "Chapel at ten," every one would have understood it. Indeed, wherever language is universally intelligible, it becomes bad grammar. The direction of a letter is, grammatically, absolute nonsense. "John Smith, Esq., 747, Strand, London, w.c." is simply unmeaning. There is no connexion whatever between the words; and it would take several lines to develop their meaning fully. They are something between a request, an order, and the memorandum of a contract to or with the Postmaster-General to convey the letter on which they are written to the place indicated, and there to tender it to any one who is willing to receive it in the name of John Smith. This, however, is only one part of what they convey; for, as between the writer of the letter and the person addressed, they have a meaning quite independent of the Postmaster-General, signifying that the writer addresses Mr. Smith, and no one else. In an overwhelming majority of written communications, ambiguities and obscurities are not only latent, but remain undetected, and cause no practical inconvenience, and thus few people are made aware of their existence; and therefore, when they have occasion to write upon matters in which differences of opinion or of interest lead men to be critical, they

neglect to guard against deficiencies which they had never been accustomed to recognise as such. In a letter to the *Times*, to which we have already referred, it is most justly observed that almost every lawyer writes clearly and fully, though his style may be pedantic, cumbrous, or slovenly. We may add to this observation the remark, that if any one wishes to gain a style at once concise, accurate, and weighty, he cannot do better than study certain classes of legal documents. Special pleading is one of the best of schools in the world both for logic and for composition; and there are hardly any English compositions which can compete in some of the highest qualities of English style with the cases laid before the House of Lords or the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. It is a curious illustration, by the way, of the difference between spoken and written language, that lawyers who will draw pleadings, write opinions, and report cases with the utmost nicety of language, often speak grammar of which a charity boy would be ashamed. "In this case, gentlemen, there are two *hypotheses*, upon either of which alternatives you will find a verdict for the plaintiff," was the declaration of a gentleman whose written pleadings were highly profitable to himself, and satisfactory to his clients. The great Lord Eldon himself is recorded (obviously by a merciless short-hand writer) to have propounded the following Thucydidean doctrine at the trial of O'Coigly for high treason:—"Therefore any means which can be adopted consistently with the rules of justice, to know who these three persons are, I shall certainly think it my duty, again protesting against its being considered as any censure upon them, so far to concur with my learned friends in what they have been stating, as to relieve the prisoner from the necessity of challenging those persons by challenging them myself." An equally faithful reporter ascribes the following wonderful question to Lord Chief Justice Hyde—"You took a man in the dark by the throat, that man that was guilty of such a thing, as when that you did let him go to call his companions to bring the money, bring fellows to you single; I would be glad to know whether in this case they would not have knocked you on the head and killed you?" If almost any conversation were taken down verbatim it would produce results equally singular. The advantage which lawyers have over their neighbours consists simply in the fact that they know better than other people how incorrect spoken language is, and that they have been trained to avoid in writing the faults which they constantly commit in speaking.

MR. JOHN NUGENT.

SCHOLARS who reduce myths into the language of history seem to say that a good many of the monsters of mythology were only mixed tribes and coalescing families. Griffins and Arimasps were but nomad races in a perpetual state of feud; Harpies only represented the accidental collection of the peculiarities of different fierce barbarian tribes; and the combination of lion, goat, and snake in the Chimera, was a symbolical way of stating what sort of a compound nation inhabited a certain district of Lycia. We shall have to invert this process. We can get our Chimera out of a single individual. Mr. Nugent, late American Resident in British Columbia, has the exact qualities which make a monster of the true classical type. He combines, in a happy whole, the pleasant ethnological and social characteristics of the Irishman, the Californian, and the American. It is as though the shillelagh, the bowie-knife, and the rifle were united in a single ugly, but very dangerous weapon. Nor are Mr. Nugent's professional avocations less varied than his very composite nationality. He is, or has been, an Irish newspaper editor practising in California, and a Yankee placeman, sent out, not only as all Ambassadors and Residents are said to be sent out—to lie for their country's good—but, like a true liegeman of a single section of American politics, to agitate for his party, as a "special agent," in the very congenial soil of a new colony.

And certainly Mr. Nugent does credit to his antecedents. He is as untruthful and insolent as the Irishman of history and novels—as big and blustering as the Yankee of fact; and San Francisco, at its worst and wildest, never produced any lawlessness and contempt for the political rights of others more complete than this great representative of the diplomatic courtesies and international rights of a great country. Mr. John Nugent's proclamation to the American citizens of the United States in Vancouver's Island and British Columbia, is a bunkum leading article addressed to the very worst section of American politicians—it is a bid for employment at home because he was unfit for his duties abroad. No doubt Mr. Nugent understands his own game. We do not suspect him to be guilty of any wish so lofty, or of aim so intelligible, as to embroil the two countries by his swaggering nonsense. All he wants is to get capital out of his own position. He thinks—and probably he is right—that the best way to be a great man at home is to insult the Britishers. Greater and better men than he have risen to the White House by arts not altogether dissimilar. On the whole, perhaps, it is more dignified to be the whetstone than the knife when the blade is of the Nugent temper, and destined for the dignified uses to which political tools in the United States are put.

Still it is a melancholy reflection that a country containing so many of the elements of greatness as the United States should abound in Nugeents. It is well-known that the best men in the

States decline the unequal political contest with these ruffians. But this is not so much the result as the cause of real internal weakness. No nation is really great which does not respect itself, and no nation can afford to vindicate self-respect and its own sense of dignity by bullying. It is undoubtedly the fault of the great minds of America—and it must be their punishment—to allow themselves to be represented by men of the Nugent class. He scarcely exaggerates what everybody knows to be the general aspect of his country towards all the world. American life, social and political, is only an application to all concerns of the national custom of relieving the mucous membranes. In diplomacy and politics, and in all public relations, the American's presence is known by a constant, uniform, and consistent expectoration. He makes himself known by a preliminary hawk of defiance—he indicates scorn by a snort—his prayers are a nasal snuffle—and his intercourse is a constant flood of saliva. He spits himself into notoriety, and the path of the great Eagle through the world is marked by a pretty track of very unsightly and slimy deposit. So, when Mr. John Nugent voids his rheum upon the beard of that very young specimen of the British Lion which has been lately whelped in Vancouver's Island, we only notice him because he represents a disgraceful national rather than a personal characteristic.

Mr. Nugent boasts of "the sobriety of deportment, the decent observance of all the proprieties of life"—or, as he goes on to enlarge upon these pleasing features of national virtue, "the forbearance under aggression, the all-pervading love of order and spirit of obedience to the laws"—which distinguish the American sojourners from the children of Hell among whom their tents are pitched. Now, considering that this Arcadian simplicity of manners, together with these refined virtues, the very crown and ornament of civilization—and the result, even in favourable circumstances, only of a long course of order and social peace—are predicated of American squatters and gold-diggers, we might at once say that this gross and absurd description of what, from the nature of the case, can have no existence, could only be ventured upon for a purpose. It is quite useless to retaliate this sort of language; but for a nation which has gone through the Californian fires, and which only recently wrote in its annals the ugly page of the destruction of the Quarantine establishment of New York, to pretend that the very scum and offscourings of its population, the dangerous classes which every society is constantly sloughing off—and these must be the staple of American citizenship in British Columbia—can be favourably contrasted with any community on earth, is simply absurd. Nor is the account which Mr. Nugent gives of the form under which British authority is organized on Fraser's River more credible. Fortunately, we know, from the able and trustworthy correspondent of the *Times*, under what conditions law and order are successfully vindicated in this remarkable settlement. His picture is the very reverse of Mr. Nugent's. Undoubtedly there are no professional lawyers in Vancouver's Island, though perhaps on this account, as scoffers might say, there is the more substantial justice. But we know that the police is both organized and active in that part of the world—that crime is repressed with an energy which is not unnaturally distasteful to Mr. Nugent's compatriots; and when the question is about the relative savagery of British officials and American citizens on the loose and in the diggings, we can afford to let judgment go by default. There is some consolation in the assurance that most likely the good feeling, or at least the interests, of the Americans settling in British Columbia will make them proof against Nugent's incendiary language. To keep their gold, they must keep the peace; and though they are doubtless ready enough for a row, they know very well that they would be the first losers by it. And the mere fact that Mr. Nugent has not a single case to produce of the alleged acts of injustice and oppression towards American citizens of which he complains, is a sufficient proof that they only exist in his interested and seditious imagination. He wishes to foment ill-feeling between the English and American settlers, in the hope that some day the Monroe doctrine may receive a little further development, and that "America for the Americans" may receive an interpretation which shall cover the annexation not only of Cuba and Mexico, but of certain tempting provinces further north. This is what Mr. Nugent means. He is at present a disgraced official—at least, he is recalled from his appointment. He has leeway to make up as well as popularity to achieve; and to cover his own failure he gets up a cry. No doubt it will fail as far as the immediate and direct consequence is concerned. Mr. Nugent is not the man to be believed anywhere—least of all in the society which he has done his best to convulse and to break up. We have no apprehension that his fireball will disturb the public or local peace, either in our diplomatic relations, or in the society of British Columbia. The British Government is not impotent; and if it were, the American settlers know very well that its incapacity would scarcely be remedied by the fanfare of an appeal to the almighty paternity of protection which the great American fatherland extends to its humblest child in every region of the earth, according to Messrs. Nugent and Cass. But for its remote and more substantial object—the mere bunkum end of the Nugent letter—we have no doubt that it will be a great success. Its writer knows the staple of the American patriot. He has vindicated in the highest manner the national character for mischief-making, insolence, and mendacity. He has done his best to make brethren not to dwell together in unity. He has tried what swagger, threats, and intimidation will do to check

and to weaken the moral power of the Executive—to encourage the lawless—and to sow suspicion in a community weak and tottering only by reason of its infancy. He has held out hopes which have no meaning, and he has promised vengeance for grievances which have no existence. And so long as, unfortunately, these arts are the credentials of American greatness, so long is it to be apprehended that Mr. Nugent has taken the sure path which leads to the highest posts of American ambition.

THE COMMON-SENSE OF ART.

UNDER this title, Mr. Beresford Hope has published the substance of an eloquent and suggestive address delivered by him at the Architectural Museum, as the inauguration of a course of lectures for the present season. The importance of the subject, especially at the present time, and the position of the speaker as one of the leading members of an influential school of architecturists, seem to bespeak some notice of the publication at our hands.

The staple of the discourse is not exactly what we should have anticipated from its title. Had we been called upon to define the Common-Sense of Art, at least as applied to architecture, we should have made it to consist in utility and moderation—in doing what is required to be done in the simplest and most direct manner—in subordinating ornamental accessories to strength and reality of construction—in choosing the most suitable and economical method and materials—and in avoiding hazardous experiments and doubtful extremes. In this way would Common-Sense in Art be strictly analogous to the same excellent quality in morals. Law has been said, in the same spirit, to be the perfection of common-sense. That is to say, the theory of the law is, that, without aiming at impossibilities, it practically strikes a fair balance between the conflicting rights of man and man. Mr. Beresford Hope, however, soaring to a much higher flight, defines the common-sense of art to be "the best poetry [of art] dealing with the best subjects." "It is," he says, "as much above poetry as poetry is above prose." This, though very true, we consider to be somewhat transcendental. We do not dispute that the highest phases of what M. Rio would call "poesy," as embracing the creations of every kind of artist or poet, may be shown, by an analytical process, to be really consistent with our more humble definition—though, indeed, genius is generally thought to be something very unlike common-sense. But the audience at the South Kensington Museum—so far at least as it was composed of art students—seems to us to have stood more in need of being reminded, in reverse order, that common-sense is the first round of the ladder to success, than that the masterpieces of architecture, sculpture, painting, and music are, when examined, the best exemplifications of the principle.

The main object of the lecturer, when he comes to the application of his theory, is to show that, as in universal art, so particularly in architecture, the artist, guided by common sense, will borrow from every quarter—will adopt any expedient—will shrink from no innovation in the fair and legitimate embodiment of his conceptions and the fulfilment of his purpose and design. In fact, this is by far the boldest manifesto we have yet seen of what is called, in the architectural controversies of the day, the doctrine of eclecticism. This is remarkable enough as coming from one who, in his artistic relations, is an exponent of that ecclesiologistic party which, though for some years it has been in the vanguard of the party of progress, had its origin in a much narrower view of art. Mr. Hope refers, in the course of his address, to this gradual development of aims and sympathies among the more energetic English revivers of Pointed Architecture; and he shows that this growth is a natural one, arising from larger experience and wider observation, and in no sense a negation of the original starting-point. It was when the Gothic architecture, first of France, then of Germany, and finally of Italy, became familiar to English students, that they learnt to generalize, and discovered that our own insular type was but one variety of a universal style. Thenceforward it was impossible but that the practice of medieval architecture should take a step forward towards a new development. An architect who had mastered the essential principles of the style by the study of ever so many local or national types, could no longer slavishly adhere, unless for a particular reason, to the narrow precedents of some one variety. Accordingly, a certain eclecticism, which has borrowed many of the distinctive features of the Continental styles, and notably those of the too long despised Gothic of Italy, has become the characteristic of the leading English architects of the day. This progress culminated in the happy selection of Mr. Scott's admirable design for the new Foreign Office, in which the presence of foreign elements—most artistically fused and blended into an ornate, but in some respects novel, type of genuine Gothic—is strikingly apparent. And the still more recent joint selection of Mr. Scott and Mr. Digby Wyatt as architects of the building for the Council of India, which is to adjoin the Foreign Office, gives us reasons for hoping that the influence of the latter artist, acting in co-operation with Mr. Scott in so conspicuous an undertaking, may result in the introduction of some new and important elements into the composition of that Gothic of the future which we seem to be on the eve of inaugurating. This judicious, and indeed inevitable, eclecticism is the distinguishing glory of our English architects. Nothing of the sort has yet been seen in France or Germany. Each country has adhered as yet to its own fossilized type. The French, in particular, are

bigoted followers of their Gothic of the twelfth century—a style which indeed we may freely allow to be perhaps the grandest existing form of Pointed architecture; and the late M. Lassus not only competed at Lille under the motto, "L'eclectisme est la phaie de l'art," but stoutly defended his position in a friendly correspondence with a contemporary English periodical. Nor has the advance of the English eclectics been unopposed at home. The president of the Oxford Architectural Society, well known for his services to the cause of purely archaeological architecture, has lately published the expression of his regret that the Gothic of the new Foreign Office has any admixture of types that are new to the mere English antiquary. To this somewhat narrow-minded remonstrance, however, Mr. Beresford Hope's powerful vindication of a progressive eclecticism is a more than sufficient answer by anticipation.

If we differ in any respects from the lecturer's conclusions, it is not so much in principle as in detail. So uncompromising is his assertion of the abstract propriety of eclecticism, that he seems to us scarcely to insist strongly enough on the concrete necessity of an assimilating process in order to produce a homogeneous result. Allowing for the pardonable exaggeration of a spoken lecture, we still think more might have been said as to the limits of choice, and as to the cautions which ought to check a possible wanton abuse of architectural freedom. Granting that you may borrow anything from any quarter which will supply a want or add a grace, yet the imported element must be first reduced, so to say, to the same denominator. The new ingredient must be fused and amalgamated. The new phrase must be translated into the language which you are using. Art may be one, in its final analysis, but its forms are very different. And we take it that the architecture of the cave, the tent, the beam, and the arch, though one in a remote sense, are nevertheless, for all immediate purposes, widely diverse. This Mr. Hope is driven, by the exigencies of his argument, to overlook. "All architecture implicitly is one," he says, most truly. "For what is architecture? It is the struggle of the human intellect to assimilate that great physical want of man, the want which he feels for covering—covering for his daily life, covering for his public duties, covering for his religious observances—to that great archetypal idea of beauty which exists everywhere in the human mind." True. But he is himself obliged to admit, in his very next sentence, that the ornamentation of architectural construction "no longer directly refers itself to the archetypal idea." And as no one can even conceive of a mere "architecture of construction" without some details or features which, if not primarily decorative, yet necessarily become distinguishing characteristics of what we call style, it seems to follow that, for practical purposes, methods of architecture so dissimilar as the Egyptian, Greek, or Gothic, must be regarded, not merely as different expressions of one idea, but as essentially distinct forms of art. It is difficult enough, as all architectural thinkers will admit, to define precisely what constitutes a style, and we have all heard of indisputably Gothic buildings from which the pointed arch is altogether absent. But the eye can distinguish more delicate differences than language can express, and, whatever be the affinities of various architectural styles, or however true it may be that one is historically a derivative from the other, the effect of the mere juxtaposition of the two, without some harmonizing process, is always crude and incongruous. Against this distortion of the principle for which he so ably contends, the lecturer does not seem to us to have sufficiently guarded himself. We should tremble were he to be taken at his word, without some such necessary qualifications. But we should go quite as far as he does in counselling our architects to lay every form and variety of the building art under contribution, so long as they assimilate what they borrow to the style in which they are working—to gather sweets from every flower in the garden so long as they convert their spoils into genuine honey.

Mr. Hope will find few to gainsay him in the remainder of his excellent argument on behalf of progressive architecture, and in favour of our own Middle-Pointed style being taken for the starting-point of the new development. This part of the lecture is extremely vigorous, and replete with the most happy illustrations. We thoroughly agree with him in thinking that the later and more or less corrupted forms of Gothic, and in particular the Flowing Decorated of England, must not be overlooked by our Victorian architects, who are aiming by an eclectic process to enrich the style of their adoption. In these styles, indeed, they will see the seeds of weakness and decay—which were latent in the earlier periods—bearing their noxious fruit; but they will also find many a vein of true ore that has never been fully worked out. It is a cheering augury for the future of architecture that such principles as those enunciated by Mr. Beresford Hope in this discourse are becoming the creed of our most promising artists. That we shall see much extravagance in carrying them out is most probable. It is not to be expected that the majority will possess the uncommon gift of that common-sense which Mr. Hope seems to regard as quite a sufficient safeguard against absurd extremes. None but those who have become thoroughly imbued with the principles of the Pointed style will ever know how to infuse its spirit into elements that are borrowed from uncongenial systems. But the true masters of their art will make all they touch their own. The time has come when we need no longer be mere copyists of the past, but may advance beyond the safe shelter of precedents and authority. The Gothic revival of our generation is out of its nonage. May it have an auspicious future!

PHOTOTYPES AND PHOTOGLYPHS.

PHOTOGRAPHY occupies a singular position among the results of science. It deals with some of the most delicate and subtle of all the refined processes of chemical manipulation, yet is practised with the best success, for the most part, by men who are in no way chemists. It needs, indeed, the qualities of a successful manipulator—scrupulous exactness, method, and that calm temperament which irritable natures can never attain; and these are qualities whose value is enhanced if united with a certain amount of observing power. But photography needs nothing beyond this for its successful practice—nothing of the lore of science—nothing of the instinctive faculty of the investigator, nor of his power of mental abstraction. It is but a mechanical art. Indeed, the series of chemical changes which are involved in the production of a photographic picture are mysteries as yet unsolved; and even the first known, and the seemingly simplest of them all—the darkening of the chloride of silver while under the influence of light, into a greyish violet substance—is, to this hour, unexplained by chemistry. Yet Photography is an art which the million practise, and while the chemical nomenclature is in their mouths like the Zend ritual on the lips of a Parsee—a tradition which they know not how to interpret—the poorest photographic result tortured by a sixpenny portrait-taker out of the magic materials he so ignorantly handles is a scientific marvel that, in an age earlier than our own, might have been the gem of a *Schatzkammer*. The accomplished chemist, with all the resources of his laboratory and of his scientific knowledge at his disposal, is constrained so far to put himself on a level with the merest photographer as to confess that in using his camera he is nearly as much an empiric as is that photographer himself.

The recent progress made in this art exhibits much the same combination of ingenuity and empiricism which has fostered it from its outset, though perhaps the latest direction which that progress has been taking is such as to call out the former rather than the latter characteristic, for it has more especially lain in the field of mechanical contrivance than been the startling product of some new chemical divination. It has been long felt to be a great misfortune to photography, and a serious drawback to its extended application, that it is at present impossible to rely on the permanent nature of the photographic image. The substantial base of those frail shadows we call photographs is an infinitesimal amount of silver, and the mere influences of an ordinary atmosphere in a human habitation are probably enough to destroy those images after a lapse of years. It has now for some time been a serious object with the more inventive class of photographers to find a means of producing pictures in a material less subject to change from external agencies of a chemical nature than is this argentiferous shadow; and their efforts have been largely directed to the substitution for the silver salt of printers' ink, or of some analogous and equally permanent material. In order to explain the steps by which it has been sought to do this, it will scarcely be necessary to enter upon the nature of a photograph, and the general mode of its production. It is now a part of popular knowledge that the action of the light is, in the usual processes, to produce directly or indirectly a dark mark on a surface of paper or glass, or of some other substitute for these, prepared with photographic materials; and that this darkening is proportional, or nearly so, to the amount of (properly speaking the blue rays contained in) light falling upon that surface. The result is a *negative* picture with black skies and white shadows, instead of light skies and dark shadows. The *positive*, or picture of the latter kind, is obtained by taking a second negative from the first negative by superposing the latter on another prepared surface, generally of paper, and letting the light shine through the one upon the other. The picture is fixed by a chemical agent that removes the unaltered sensitive preparation, and leaves the portion of it which the light has darkened comparatively uninjured. Probably no balance could indicate the smallness of the weight of that darkened compound of silver which is left on the surface of the paper, and which forms the picture. The fixing agent, if a trace of it has remained behind, is a sure destroyer, after weeks or months, of the image which it spared at first; and atmospheric influences that in the long run may prove destructive to it, however well freed it may have been from this fixing agent, can only ultimately be warded off by the most careful treatment and persevering precaution.

To find the means of substituting for these susceptible silver salts a permanent colouring matter formed by so imperishable and comparatively rude a material as printers' ink, and to preserve at the same time the delicate pencil of the sunbeam as the graphic agent, may seem a problem of consummate difficulty. Its solution has been sought in several ways. Long ago, before the Daguerreotype had been superseded by the process of Mr. Talbot, which he called the Calotype—and which has now been developed into such exquisitely sensitive modifications in the application of collodion and albuminous films to surfaces of glass—the effort was made to render the Daguerreotype plate an engraved foundation for printers' ink. The metallic character of Daguerre's silver plates readily suggested the employment of chemical agents that would erode the silver which formed the ground, and leave the amalgam which formed the picture upon it unacted on, and therefore in relief. Many experimentalists—our

countryman Grove among the number—succeeded, by various processes, in actually taking off impressions from Daguerreotypes so treated. But the processes—so sensitive in their susceptibility to light, so sharp and delicate in the detail with which they render the picture—which have sprung from the modifications in the surface material, and a slight inversion and change in the chemical substances used in the old process of our distinguished countryman Talbot, demanded a different mode of action from that employed in the case of the Daguerreotype. The various methods by which this has been attempted concur in certain fundamental features, but diverge from these into as many different forms of process as there are in existence different methods of transferring an image from a printing surface to a sheet of paper.

It will be well first to review the points in which these various processes of photography and phototypy concur, and afterwards to consider the different paths into which they have diverged. Each process hitherto in the field aims at first forming a negative picture by any of those methods to which we may give the name of Talbotypic photographic processes—one characteristic of which is that they may be, and usually are, taken on a transparent surface. This being done, it becomes a common object with them all to obtain a transfer, or positive, from this negative picture by the ordinary method of superposition. But the susceptible material on which this second picture is to be taken must be of a kind capable of being mechanically handled by methods that shall convert the substance on which the picture is taken either directly into a print with the picture represented in some substance like printers' ink, or into a block from which impressions in such a material can be taken. In the latter case it is, of course, advisable that the block should be of the negative character, and therefore it must be obtained from a positive taken from the original negative, and not from that negative itself. The prints taken from blocks thus produced become in this way true positives. The problem, then, is to obtain, in the first place, some chemical compound which the light will act on in some quantity, so that, in place of the infinitesimal amount of silver that forms the ordinary photograph, we may have a surface so decidedly altered where the light has fallen that we may subsequently deal with it by chemical or mechanical agencies which the argentiferous image could not for an instant resist. Now, each of the phototypic methods at present before the world—and they are numerous, and are all fertile in mechanical contrivance—seeks to attain this object by acting upon one and the same fundamental chemical fact. The so-called bichromate of potassium contains the metals chromium and potassium united to a considerable amount of oxygen, one portion of which is in a state of somewhat irritable repose; for it has a strong tendency to attach and fix itself on to any substance brought into contact with it in a condition capable of ready oxidation. Certain organic substances, such as common gum arabic, gelatine, and albumen, appear to approximate to this condition of ready oxidability; but in order actually to attain it, and so to be acted on by the bichromate, they need an external aid of a kind which increases either their own affinity for oxygen or the irritability of the oxygen in the chromic compound, or perhaps both. This external aid, which a considerable heat does not appear capable of communicating, strange to say the light furnishes. The result is, that a mixture of gelatine (or of gum) and bichromate of potassium is changed by the incidence of light into a mixture of two or more new and perhaps resinous substances, whose nature is not yet understood, but which possess a property invaluable to the photographic manipulator; for whereas, before the action, these mixed substances were perfectly soluble in water—and are therefore still removable from the paper by that agent over all parts of the surface whereon the light has not fallen—it is found that wherever this subtle ray has illuminated the surface, the change effected in the gelatinous mixture is of a kind defying the solvent action of water. The photographist is in this way enabled to obtain a picture in which the ground is the unaltered surface of paper, stone, or metal, while the drawing itself is represented by the gelatine and chrome compounds in their new and insoluble form. We may take a future opportunity of showing how this beautiful result has been applied to several more or less successful processes of photographic printing.

REVIEWS.

MADAME DE POMPADOUR.*

THE biographer of the Royal mistresses of France has exhibited, in several scores of volumes, that consistent attachment to the Throne and the Altar which finds a charm in the errors of Kings and in the crimes of a splendid hierarchy. The moral and intellectual qualifications which have made M. Capefigue into a successful historian are the same which, when displayed by a contemporary chronicler, are summed up in the symbolic name of *Jenkins*. In his profound reverence for exalted station, for fine clothes, and for Royal virtues and vices, the courtly eulogist looks down on the mass of mankind as Gulliver on his return from Brobdingnag stooped to observe the dwarfish

* *Madame la Marquise de Pompadour.* Par M. Capefigue.

crowd in the streets of London. "Voltaire," he says, "had a sad monomania of impiety, but still we must do him justice; he had a respect for the hierarchy of the State, for rank, and for aristocracy, a disdain of the Parliaments, and a contempt for the lowest classes of society." M. Capefigue himself, as becomes a more consistent courtier, extends his contempt to many classes above the lowest, as he repudiates all piety but that which was sanctioned by Rome and fashionable at Versailles. It is on the authority of this profound historical philosopher that Mr. Buckle condemns the perverse Huguenots, who were equally deaf to the pretensions of the Pope and blind to the spirit of the age and the progress of the species. The writer who has celebrated the greatness of Henry IV., of Louis XIV., and of Cardinal Richelieu, confesses that, after all, Louis XV. is his favourite hero. The comeliness of his person, the dignified nonchalance of his manner, his Royal contempt for intellectual pursuits, and his more than Royal liberality of sentiment and practice in his relations with women, fill the mind of the French Jenkins with unbounded enthusiasm. On some occasions he designates the King as a Christian philosopher, and he assigns the most statesmanlike motives for his successive selection of mistresses in every class of society. If malignant contemporaries blamed the King for condescending to live with the wife of a farmer-general, M. Capefigue proudly replies with the conclusive argument that his first four acknowledged mistresses were sisters belonging to the illustrious family of Nesle. "King Louis XV. had followed the traditions of Louis XIV., who was accustomed to select his mistresses among the families of the high nobility. The Nesles were as good as the Mortemarts, and better than the D'Aubigné Maintenons." If, after the death of the Duchess of Chateauroux, the last of the four favoured sisters, Louis XV. subsided into the arms of Madame de Pompadour, and even in the questionable embrace of Madame du Barry, his choice was dictated by a patriotic regard to the inconvenience which might accrue to the State from too numerous a progeny of high-born bastards. As to the notorious harem at the *Parc aux Cerfs*, M. Capefigue has ascertained by minute local researches that there was no such residence, that it was not situated on the traditional spot, and that it was afterwards sold in allotments. It is true that, the Royal heart "not being able to emancipate itself from the ardent passion of the Bourbon family for women, the King preferred simple unknown amours," involving little ulterior expense. "If the girl became a mother," the child was provided for by an ecclesiastical benefice, and the King's daughters affectionately acknowledged more than one *de ces enfants marqués à l'effigie du Roi*—stamped after the image of the King. "To Jenkins thanks for teaching us this word," though the illustration has previously been applied to Jupiter Ammon, in the case of Alexander the Great. Having thus disposed of the *Deer Park* and its traditions, the apologist, with equal success, proceeds to confute the report that Madame de Pompadour was complaisant enough to find opportunities for the indulgence of the King's roving inclinations. "Why," he indignantly asks, "should the Marquise have troubled herself about such matters, when Bontems and Lebel were daily receiving from all quarters the most eligible offers?"—*C'était un rôle de valet de chambre, et voilà tout.* If Madame de Pompadour did sometimes arrange a delicate question on the appearance or approach of some of the Royal effigies, it was only a proof of her admirable good nature and practical tact. "Louis XV. was never tired of saying to the Marquise, 'Really, how good you are; how thankful I ought to be for your undertaking such a commission.'" To characterize in the author's language the composition of such history as this—*C'est un rôle de valet de chambre, et voilà tout.*

M. Capefigue boastfully asserts that the elevation of Madame d'Étioles to the post left vacant by Madame de Chateauroux was the result of a serious negotiation. The young lady was at the head of a wealthy establishment as the wife of M. Lenorman d'Étioles, and she had profited by her position for the purpose of making acquaintance with the principal courtiers, and even of attracting the passing attention of the King. "The Richelieus," says the admiring historian, "notwithstanding the apparent levity of their character, retained something of the lofty stamp of the great Cardinal," and the head of the house was worthy to succeed to the office which at the Court of Priam had been assigned, notwithstanding his apparent levity of character, to Sir Pandarus of Troy. "After the death of the Duchess of Chateauroux (a sad episode, which had deeply affected the King's heart and mind), it was necessary to provide him with a mistress who should declare herself against the too sentimental system of the Dauphin. It was with this view that the Duke of Richelieu and the King's friends, Soubise, Chauvelin, and d'Ayen, turned their eyes to Madame d'Étioles." An interview was arranged in the house of M. de Turneheim, her husband's uncle; and M. Lenorman removed to a distance from Paris *avec beaucoup de dignité*, and with a profitable place in addition to the reversion of his uncle's appointment.

Madame d'Étioles, now Marchioness of Pompadour, after exchanging civilities with her titular colleague, Queen Marie Lezinska, proceeded to enter on the duties and dignities of her office, and if she displayed the reckless prodigality which generally belongs to Social Evils when they are in prosperous circumstances, she was undoubtedly a graceful, accomplished, and brilliant specimen of impropriety. M. Capefigue records with enthusiasm

her spirit in expending three millions of livres on the decoration of one of her numerous residences; and the more serious cost of her policy in originating the Seven Years' War is represented as having been made useless only by the factious opposition of the Parliaments, and by the pernicious influence of Encyclopedists. It is hardly necessary to say that M. Capefigue is one of those political economists who consider that public wealth is most effectually increased by a liberal expenditure on objects of luxury and art. He records with regretful admiration the number of sinecures which provided in the ancient Court for a few men of letters or artists, and for a great number of ornaments of the Pandaric profession. "They are called abuses," he says, in a fine Jenkins burst of contempt; "est-ce que les gens d'élite et d'esprit vivent d'autre chose que d'abus, de priviléges, et d'exceptions?" When Sir Robert Peel pledged himself, with characteristic candour, to reform all proved abuses, a genuine Tory objected that he took little interest in an abuse till it was proved. The courtly historian more directly grasps the bull by the horns when he identifies with corruption and abuse the existence of the class to which he aspires to belong. Nothing can be more logically consistent than his enthusiasm for the age of Louis XV. The objection that Madame de Pompadour's liberality was exercised at the expense of a starving population is refuted by an argument at the same time original and satisfactory. If the peasantry were in distress, how comes it, says the sceptical historian, that the gentlemen and ladies of the court disguised themselves as shepherds and shepherdesses—that Marmontel described Annette and Lubin—and that Watteau so often represented in glowing colours the scenes of a golden age of pastoral felicity? Every collector who possesses in his cabinet or on his chimney-piece a little Sévres shepherd in striped pink breeches is in a position to prove that all the provinces of France were inhabited in the middle of the eighteenth century by an ornamental race of lotus-eaters, piping and dancing through life in a state of graceful and indolent enjoyment. Mr. Buckle may collect from the most recent works of his favourite author numerous additional proofs of the utter unimportance of morality to the interests of prosperity and civilization.

If vice must flourish, it is perhaps desirable that, as in the Pompadour era, it should be tasteful and ornamental. The reigning mistress had a genuine talent for the lighter descriptions of art, as exhibited in furniture, in decorative painting, in gems, and in porcelain. In literature according to the fashion of the time she had an interest or a belief, and she successively introduced Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Rousseau to the reluctant and suspicious King. While she still resided with her husband, the peniless Abbé Bernis had celebrated her beauty in verses about Venus and the Graces, and Hebe and Cupid; and his grateful heroine rewarded the poet with the Venetian Embassy, the seals of the Foreign Office, and ultimately with a Cardinal's hat. During the glorious epoch of the old French Monarchy, the trappings of the Scarlet Lady of Rome were often furnished by congenial hands connected with the same colour and profession. The victims who were burnt in France for profanity when Church and State were represented by Madame de Pompadour and her nominees, are far beneath the notice of the sublime historian of the antechamber.

In common with all French writers of the same moral and intellectual level, M. Capefigue is hostile to England, and he considers the Pompadour alliance between France and Austria a masterpiece of diplomatic skill. After the failure of Bernis as a Minister, the mistress showed creditable sagacity in her selection of Choiseul; but M. Capefigue hesitates in his enthusiasm for a statesman whom he foresees that he will have to condemn when he falls hereafter under the displeasure of Madame du Barry. In that Choiseul was unfriendly to England, the historian applauds his patriotism; but so far as he was tolerant of Parliamentary pretensions, and inclined to the liberal philosophy of the day, he must be considered to have deserved his final fall. The fine gentlemen who were beaten in the field every summer in time to adorn the Court during the dead season, receive more unqualified eulogy. Soubise might be defeated at Rosbach, and Richelieu might peculate at the expense of the Commissariat, but their names have an aristocratic ring which exempts them from the criticism which would be justly inflicted on plebeian corruption or incapacity. Pope expressed by anticipation M. Capefigue's deepest convictions in some of his best-known lines:—

Tis from high life high characters are drawn;
A saint in cape is twice a saint in lawn;
A judge is just, a chancellor juster still,
A gownsman learned, a bishop what you will—
Wise if a minister, but if a king,
More wise, more learned, more just, more everything.

The still more important position of reigning mistress escaped the notice of the ill-informed English poet. If he had lived at the Court of Louis XV., he would have known that Madame de Pompadour was "more everything," as she was more powerful, than the King himself.

The situation seems to have been eminently agreeable in all external circumstances. Enjoying unlimited wealth, universally courted by nobles, by statesmen, and by men of letters, Madame de Pompadour received visits from duchesses without the obligation of returning the compliment, and she only rose from her chair to salute the princes and princesses of the blood. In his enthusiasm for her memory, her biographer even undertakes to

prove the innocence of her relations with the king by the irrefragable argument that her Jesuit confessor admitted her to the participation of the sacraments. It is, perhaps, more surprising that the good father should overlook her disposition to coquet with the infidel Encyclopedists, and that he should fail to anticipate her share in the expulsion of his Order from France during the administration of Choiseul. This leaning to fashionable heterodoxy is the only failing which the eulogist discovers in the otherwise faultless character of the adorable *Marquise*. The nobility of those days, as he observes in their praise, if they were debauched in their lives and profane in their language, never failed, like the devil when he was sick, to recur to their superstition in the hour of trouble. "Ils s'agenouillaient en pénitents bien humbles au lit de mort, après avoir insulté l'Eglise en véritables mécréants." It was dangerous, it was impious, and above all it was in bad taste to countenance Diderot and D'Alembert in their crusade against the faith. Unfortunately, Voltaire and Frederick the Great had set the fashion of irreligion, and Madame de Pompadour was not the person to deprive herself of any enjoyment which could arise from the gratification of vanity by the praises of popular writers. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that, if she made the most of this world, she, like many of her class, with a prudent forethought, "heded" for the next. The light and airy sovereign of France had probably never clearly known whether she believed in religion, or whether there was any religion to believe in. If her freethinking friends of the Encyclopædia were greedy and selfish, she had found that the Church was ready to count her favoured sycophants in the number of its princes. In all her brilliant career, the poor woman had probably never met with an honest man, or heard a single sentence of unsophisticated truth. She had put on the costume of Diana to fascinate the King, and perhaps more mysterious powers might be won over by an equally appropriate travesty. In anticipation of the worst, therefore, she had affiliated herself to the Order of St. Francis; and after her death she was, in pursuance of her own desire, appalled for the tomb in the uniform of that accommodating fraternity. Her eulogist will not understand the scorn which had long before been poured upon those who,

Dying, put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan seek to pass disguised.

To courtiers of a certain order every masquerade is admirable. The King had been governed by Madame de Pompadour for twenty years, and he was probably tired of a mistress who had necessarily outlived her youthful charms. Louis XV., according to M. Capefigue, has been unjustly censured for his indifference to her loss, for, "as a Christian philosopher," he knew the real value of life and death. His religious wisdom induced him subsequently to promote Madame du Barry to the vacant dignity; nor will the zealous pornographer be backward in following his hero through the history of his latest mistress.

THE LOGIC OF BANKING.*

MR. GILBART has chosen rather a puzzling title for his most recent publication. What is the logic of Banking? Has every trade a manner of reasoning peculiar to itself, or is there some exceptional characteristic in Banking which gives it a singularity in this respect? The old notion was, that the principles of ordinary reasoning and of good sense were applicable to all trades and pursuits. Are we to give this up? Have grocers an exceptional logic, or butchers a peculiar syllogism? What unheard-of process of reasoning can be required in borrowing money from A and lending to B—which we have always understood to be the essential function of the banker? As we open the book, we think that the title-page requires an explanation. We cannot without a struggle resign a rooted conviction that the ordinary principles of argument are applicable to all pecuniary pursuits, nor can we easily admit the existence of a special kind of logic peculiarly adapted to so commonplace a trade as banking.

Mr. Gilbart's preface can hardly be said to explain this difficulty. His account of the origin of his work is rather remarkable. It appears that he formerly wrote a book called *Logic for the Million*, in which he recommended his readers to "associate their reasonings with their daily avocations." He has since reflected that he might apply this impressive maxim in his own concerns. "I afterwards thought," he tells us, "that I might exemplify my own instructions by selecting from my writings on Banking such extracts as might illustrate those principles which I had expounded in my *Logic for the Million*. I accordingly read with this view the works I had published on Banking, and thus were formed the first three parts of the present work. The large type is for the most part a transcript from the work on Logic, and the extracts in small type are from my works on Banking. This union of literary productions not originally connected with each other may serve to indicate that my writings on Banking are in accordance with the principles of Logic, and that my writings on Logic are adapted for practical application to the principles of Banking." There is therefore, after all, no peculiar "logic" in banking. The only singular phenomenon is, that Mr. Gilbart, who has written a work on Banking

* *The Logic of Banking. A Familiar Exposition of the Principles of Reasoning, and their Application to the Art and Science of Banking.* By J. W. Gilbart, F.R.S. London: Longmans. 1859.

and a work on Logic, should also wish to interleave the two. Every one has heard of the literary gentleman who read for China under the letter C in the Encyclopædia, and for metaphysics under the letter M, and combined the information so obtained into an article on "Chinese Metaphysics." Mr. Gilbart has carried the art of book composition a new step. He would say, I have written on China, and I have written on Metaphysics; I have only to compile a new book of extracts from both, and the result will show that my writings on Metaphysics are applicable to China, and that my writings on China are in accordance with the doctrines of Metaphysics. As readers, we must demur to this position. Even now every one must feel a little awe when he looks at a long row of publications by a voluminous author. But what will be our feelings if that author is to be at liberty to cut up and reunite these works as often as he pleases—to investigate their "permutations and combinations," and show us how "Extract A from my third book" will read in juxtaposition "with Extract C from my eleventh book?"

Our readers may be interested to see the mode in which Mr. Gilbart has effected the combination of two topics so dissimilar. "We give," he says in his second page, "the name of Reasoning to that operation of the mind whereby we infer one proposition from two or more propositions. These two or more propositions are called the premisses, and the proposition inferred is called an inference, or a conclusion. These premisses and the conclusions, taken together, are called an argument or a syllogism. Thus—if every joint-stock bank has more than six partners, and the bank of Messrs. Coutts and Co. has not more than six partners, then we infer that the bank of Messrs. Coutts and Co. is not a joint-stock bank." "And if the distance from the Bank to the Great Western Railway is not more than five miles, and the cab fare is at the rate of sixpence a mile, then we argue that the cab fare for the whole distance from the Bank to the Great Western Railway cannot be more than two shillings and sixpence." It can scarcely be necessary to observe with how little propriety such illustrative examples can be called the logic of banking. The last sentence might with equal appropriateness be called the "Logic of Paying off Cabs."

The mode in which the two sets of our author's writings are proved to be connected is, however, sometimes more refined. Few of our readers will, perhaps, at a first reading, detect anything in the following extract from one of Mr. Gilbart's books on Banking, which would seem suitable to a treatise on Logic. "Should you be dissatisfied with anything connected with your account, make your complaint to the BANKER himself, and not to the clerks. Let all your communications be made in person, rather than by LETTER. But do not stay long at one interview. Make no observations about the weather, or the news of the day. Proceed at once to the business you are come about, and when that is settled, retire. This will save your banker's time, and give him a favourable impression of your character as a man of business." The way in which this observation is introduced into a treatise on Logic is this. Mr. Gilbart observes that as this science "has nothing to do with receiving or retaining information, so also it has nothing to do with imparting information or with the giving advice or commands. . . . But sometimes the terms, though simply the language of advice or command, will imply a logical process." This is the case with the advice he gave many years ago on the mode of managing your business with your banker. The last sentence in the paragraph "contains a reason." You will not be thought business-like if you converse on the weather.

The mode in which the relation of final cause and effect is applied to banking is even more ingenious. "Motives," says Mr. Gilbart, with perhaps questionable accuracy, "are the causes of actions. A final cause is the object or design with which a thing is done. The same thing may be performed from different motives, and hence have different final causes." "Among the relations of the feelings of the mind and the actions of the conduct, we may take into consideration the act of resignation;" and various reasons, more or less good, are assigned for which an *employé* in a bank may think it desirable to leave its service. Mr. Gilbart proceeds:—"But whatever may be the cause, the question now arises, how far a superior officer in a bank is justified in resigning, and transferring his talents and his influence to a rival establishment? As an abstract question, apart from special circumstances, we should contend that a manager, or other superior officer of a bank, has at all times a right to transfer his services to another bank; but we think he has no right to employ his influence to attract the customers, or otherwise to injure the bank he has left. Perhaps, in all cases, he ought to give his present employers the option of retaining his services, if they have the power of placing him in a position equal to that now offered to him. It is difficult to lay down rules for all possible cases. The following letters will show the course I adopted myself when I was invited to become the General Manager of the London and Westminster Bank." And then we have a long letter from Messrs. "Blunt, Roy, Blunt, and Duncan," the solicitors to the committee who were endeavouring to establish the London and Westminster Bank, asking Mr. Gilbart to become its general manager; and this is followed by Mr. Gilbart's reply to their application, which is perhaps rather an example of caution than of logic, as it only informs his correspondents that if he ever leaves the service of the Provincial Bank of Ireland, with which he was then connected, it must be to make

a change "considerably to his advantage." We can hardly state the subtle process by which this instance of autobiography is associated with logic. We suppose it is this:—"Logic is concerned with all kinds of reasoning; reasoning from final causes is among those kinds; motives are a species of those causes, and men resign from motives; when I wrote to Messrs. Blunt, Roy, Blunt, and Duncan, I was myself an example of an *employé* influenced by a final cause."

A very curious episode in this book is a section on the "Poetry of Banking," which seems to be the republication of an essay which Mr. Gilbart published on that subject in a magazine several years ago. He does not give a very cheerful account of his trade. A banker's individual reminiscences, he informs us, are often highly poetical:

While, on the one hand, his mind is gratified by the recollection of the instances in which he had been the means of raising honest industry to affluence, on the other, he recollects many cases in which his caution has been over-reached, and his confidence abused. Often, amid the gloom of his evening walks, he will fancy that he sees the ghosts of his past due bills stalking across his path; he seems to view their hideous countenances, some cast down in sullen despondency at their fate, and others grinning with ferocious delight at having outwitted a banker. The horrid spectres unnerve his strength, and make him resolve never again to trust to even the fairest appearances of integrity; and at other times they rouse his indignation, and make him wish for the thunderbolts of heaven, that he might hurl the culprits to the nether world, and there inflict a heavier punishment than can be imposed by human laws.

This passage occurs in a chapter entitled "Reasoning from Parables, Fables, and Proverbs," applied to banking. We cannot but hope that it is in some measure fabulous. The portrait of Mr. Gilbart, prefixed to this volume, gives no indication of his being haunted so much.

Possibly, however, the most remarkable instance of acuteness in the volume is the manner in which its author illustrates the exemplification in banking of Reasoning from Example. "We reason from example," he observes, "when we adduce the particular acts of other joint-stock banks for the purpose of inducing the bank with which we are connected to adopt a similar line of conduct. The following article, which I inserted in the *Banker's Magazine* for January, 1846, will supply an illustration of this kind of reasoning:—"A BANKING NOSEGAY: to be presented to all bank directors and private bankers on New Year's Day;" and then we have accounts of various presents made by joint-stock banks to those in their service. We should have fancied that this was a somewhat delicate subject for a man in Mr. Gilbart's situation. A mischievous person cannot help thinking that he was "endeavouring to induce" the bank with which he was connected to adopt "a similar line of conduct," but we do not in the least believe that it was so intended. "We reason," too, adds our author, "from example when we present private or public testimonials to individuals to commemorate their exertions in favour of the banking institutions of the country."

The reasoning implied in such testimonials is this:—You see the honour which is acquired by promoting the public good; if you have equal talents, and are in a similar position as the party whose exertions are here commemorated, go and do likewise, and you may obtain similar honour. We take the following article, in illustration of this kind of reasoning, from the *Banker's Magazine* of 1846:—

"On Monday, the 2nd March ult., a number of the country Joint-stock Banks presented to Mr. Gilbart a service of plate, bearing the following inscription, which expresses the objects of the presentation:

"Presented by the Joint-stock Banking Companies of England and Wales to James William Gilbart, Esquire, the first Manager of the first Joint-stock Bank established in London, in testimony of their respect and esteem for his character and abilities, and in acknowledgment of the important services he has rendered by his writings and exertions in the cause of Joint-stock Banking."

This plate was accompanied by the "following address"—which is given at full length. Mr. Gilbart proceeds to inform us that we may "reason erroneously from examples;" and such is doubtless the case. But we should be disposed to infer from these instances, that Mr. Gilbart was a little too much occupied with the successful parts of his career, and too inclined to write about himself.

We own we think that almost the only instruction to be derived from the *Logic of Banking* is to be sought in the striking exemplification it gives of the danger of following one of its author's favourite precepts. We do not mean that his advice should not be followed, but that his example warns us of a danger to which he scarcely seems to be himself alive. Mr. Gilbart is fond of insisting on the advantages which a man of business obtains by devoting himself to some pursuits—and especially literary pursuits—in addition to his business. And it is unquestionable that by so doing he will place himself within reach of some advantages; but, at the same time, he will expose himself to more than one temptation. An active-minded man who gains a little knowledge from a few books is almost always inclined to overrate the comparative value of that knowledge. He has, in truth, no sufficient standard of comparison. He feels that his new acquisitions have been most beneficial to him—have given him a new source of pleasure—a new kind of repose—a new power of comprehending many things around him. He is scarcely ever aware how many more similar things there are in the world—what a complex store of reflections mankind have accumulated—how long what is new to him has been known to others. If his disposition be a little vain and self-confident—and the disposition of successful men of action is so not unfrequently—the temptation to an undue exaltation of his recent acquisitions will be still greater. In that case, the chances are

that he will "rush into print," to explain to the world that with which the world has long been familiar. Nor is his exposition likely to be very excellent. The matter-of-fact parts will be clear, but the ornamental parts will be rarely in good taste, and any attempt at eloquence will be shocking. Even in the first page of such a dry book as that before us, we find—"The art of reasoning is called Logic. But you know Shakspere has said—

What we call a Rose
By any other name would smell as sweet."

Until the education of men of business becomes more systematic, prolonged, and careful than in most cases it is now, we must anticipate much needless writing from the ill-regulated enthusiasm of their first studies, and much unpleasant writing from their ignorance of the kind of ornament which is adapted to a cultivated taste.

DR. FRANKLIN'S LIFE.*

CIRCULATING Libraries are perhaps the most astonishing institution of the day. Not very long ago they were, for the most part, mere repositories of bad novels; but within a very few years they have, at least in London, changed their character, and at present they circulate amongst the educated classes (giving those words a very liberal interpretation indeed) a sort of books which it is not altogether easy to describe, but which bear the same relation to the permanent literature of the country as newspapers bear to history. There are probably many hundred subscribers to certain well-known houses of this description, whose bargain is that for a guinea a-year they shall be supplied with three volumes a week of what are characteristically described as "new books." We may lay claim to as large an experience of the character of such works as falls to the share of most people, inasmuch as every week brings under our notice a fresh supply of them to be noticed in these columns. To those notices we must refer for our detailed opinion of the books which are reviewed; but to give our readers a notion of what is not reviewed would be a difficult task. The number of simply worthless books that are published is amazing. The flood of second-rate books bearing upon every sort of subject all round the compass, and born to live at most till they have made half-a-dozen journeys in Mr. Mudie's, Mr. Booth's, or Mr. Bull's well-known carts, is still more bewildering. It is difficult to imagine anything more chaotic than the state of mind into which those persons must be thrown whose intellectual food consists principally of the "three volumes a week" supplied to them under such contract as we have described. Most of them would like to read books which have already stood the test of success, and which are far more amusing than the obscure biographies and insipid travels which form the staple of ephemeral publications, if they knew what to choose. In order to give them some assistance in doing so, we have occasionally ventured upon the audacious step of disregarding that curious conventional law which provides that, except in the case of a reprint or new edition, it shall not be lawful to review old books. We propose to continue the same practice, and to point out from time to time the characteristics of standard books, which, though out of fashion, are better worth reading than the enormous majority of those which swagger about clubs and drawing-rooms, clad in coats of many colours, which Solomon in all his glory would not have equalled.

The work which we have now chosen for this purpose is one of the most delightful books in the language. The Life of Dr. Franklin, begun by himself and continued by his friend Dr. Stüber, together with a large selection of his more popular works, forms in the edition before us a beautiful little volume of about 500 pages. It does not contain a page which is not well worth reading. It begins with Franklin's autobiography—a fragment which only carries his Life down to the age of twenty-four. It was written in a spare week when the author was upwards of eighty years old, and is perhaps as admirable a specimen of what a Life should be as could be named in the whole range of literature. The vivacity and humour with which the story is told—the shrewdness with which the old man points his story without moralizing or preaching, and the manly frankness with which he confesses his faults, neither whining about them nor gloating over them—form one of the most attractive combinations that we are acquainted with. We need not repeat the details of a story with which many of our readers are no doubt well acquainted; but we may observe that the general tone of the book suggests several conclusions, which may or may not be true, but which are not unsupported by other evidence. The first is, that the tone of feeling of the society in which Franklin lived must have been infinitely healthier, more modest, and more vigorous than that of his countrymen of the present day. We know by sad experience what to expect when we take up one of those hideous publications which at present find their way from the United States to this country, printed on cotton paper, and bound in such a manner that they always fall to pieces when they are opened wide enough to lie flat on the table. Such a book as the *Life of Dr. Kane*, which we reviewed some time since, is a typical one. A ranting, screaming, swaggering style, like the strut of a drunken tailor's apprentice—commonplace thoughts

whipped up into froth—a pretentious half-knowledge of a thousand subjects, no one of which the writer has ever studied further than was necessary to teach him a smattering of its technicalities—a total absence of wit or humour, the place of which is supplied by slang and bragging—are their all but universal characteristics. It is not an exaggeration to say that a large class of American books of the present day convey the impression (a false one, no doubt) that they proceed from the most conceited and empty-headed people on the face of the earth. This is probably due to the circumstance that in the United States the abler minds are occupied with money-making in one shape or another, and that the competition of that engrossing occupation is so great that men have no leisure for literature in any but its coarser forms. As a tacit rebuke to this vulgar and sordid temper, *Franklin's Life* is of unequalled value, though it certainly shows the earlier workings of the spirit which has since done so much to injure the national character of the United States.

Nothing can be more striking than the total absence of pretence by which the book is distinguished. It never occurred to Franklin to be proud of having been a journeyman printer, to swagger about the "order" of working men, to sneer at aristocrats, to bemoan the miseries and oppressions of the poor, or in any other way to try to make himself or his class an object of romantic interest. There is not, on the other hand, a line in his writings which implies that he was in the least degree ashamed of his early poverty. He is equally manly and natural whether he is living as a journeyman printer in London or corresponding upon equal terms with the most important people in Paris; and not only is he equally manly, but equally courteous. No example can be more necessary, or ought to be more instructive, to the beggar-on-horseback Yankee, who, whether his sphere is society or literature, is one of the greatest of all bores to foreign nations, and the most discreditable of all nuisances to his own. Persons who attach more importance than we do to physiological explanations of national character often maintain that the effect of the climate of America upon the English race has produced that febrile and clamorous habit of mind which all who can admire a great nation notwithstanding its faults must so deeply regret. To us the phenomenon seems to admit of a simpler explanation. Democratic government pushed to an extreme—that exclusive devotion to money-getting which is the natural result of depriving the higher order of minds of the social pre-eminence which is their due, and of destroying every institution by which men can be carried out of themselves, and taught to reverence the State on a small scale in great families, ancient dignities, and time-honoured customs—and, above all, the total divorce between things temporal and things spiritual which arises from the decay of the old Puritanic fervour, coupled with the absence of any national religious institutions by which the close connexion between the provinces of the Church and the State may be set in its true light—appear to us quite enough to account for the growth of vulgarity, and, as a consequence, for the decline of solid vigour in many parts of American society. It is a sad reflection—and we should be glad to learn that it is not a true one—that modern Americans do not adequately represent those sturdy founders of the Republic whom they delight so noisily to honour.

One reflection suggested by Franklin's life is of a less melancholy nature, and applies to this country as well as to the United States. There is always a tendency in human nature to transgress Solomon's rule by saying that the former times were better than these; and it is, no doubt, hard to consider wisely concerning this. There is a system of giving and taking which runs through periods as well as societies. There are advantages peculiar to every successive age; but it is difficult not to feel, after reading Franklin's account of his early career, that the society in which he lived was far less crowded and more simple than anything which exists amongst us at the present day. The path to social distinctions of all kinds was shorter, and the transition from one station in life to another effected with greater ease. It seems also to result from his account of his London career that there was at least as much intellectual activity amongst the superior class of mechanics at that time as there is at present, although those who shared in it might not enjoy the same facilities as are now within their reach for gratifying intellectual tastes.

The small volume before us contains not only Franklin's Life, but his minor works—principally essays and letters upon political or scientific subjects. Many of them, no doubt, are sufficiently familiar to our readers. The beautiful story of the experiments by which the identity of lightning and electricity was established—the accounts of the experiments with oil, and one or two others—have obtained a sort of classical reputation. The political papers are perhaps less known, because their interest has to some extent passed away since American Independence has become so familiar to us. They are, however, well worth reading, though the feelings which they create are melancholy enough. It is in our day difficult to understand the temptation to the mad misgovernment against which they remonstrate. How the people of this country ever could be such idiots as to drive the Americans into revolt upon a question of money is altogether inconceivable. That the fathers of many living men, and the grandfathers of men still young, should have preferred the assertion of unjust claims and the maintenance of the most odious monopolies to the loyalty

* *Life and Works of Dr. Benjamin Franklin*. London, 1809.

of such a people, is one of the most mournful recollections in the whole history of England. No doubt the dissolution of the connexion between England and North America was in itself, not necessarily an evil, but a most desirable event for both parties; but it must always be a subject of deep regret that it was not deferred for a few years, when it might have taken place with the full consent of both, and without laying the foundation of bitter feelings of resentment and jealousy which even now have not entirely subsided.

The style of Franklin's minor works is as remarkable as their substance. They were written when to be able to write was an accomplishment on which people bestowed more pains than they take about it at present. Not merely the workmanship, but the plan of his compositions is more solid than is usual with the fugitive literature of our own days. Their wit is particularly worthy of note. In our days, wit is generally flippant, and almost always exaggerated. It is the wit of caricatures, theatres, sentimentalists, and generally of persons whose delight it is to make toys of serious things. Franklin's wit is the very reverse of this. It is grave and weighty good sense employed in detecting the absurdities and inconsistencies of life, with a view to reprobating and reforming them. He is a great master of that wonderful logical irony which distinguished Swift, Defoe, Fielding, and Burke. *The Advice to Servants*, *The Short Way with the Dissenters*, *The Life of Jonathan Wilde*, and *The Vindication of Natural Society*, are works of the same class as Franklin's wonderful *Rules for Reducing a Great Empire to a Small One*. The parable on persecution, and the speech supposed to be delivered at Algiers in favour of Christian slavery, are well-known instances of the same thing. Perhaps the following extract from a Prussian edict, assuming claims over Great Britain, may give some of our readers a less familiar illustration of the style to which we allude. It is a parody of the colonial legislation of this country in the last century:—

Nor shall any hat-maker in any of the said countries employ more than two apprentices; but lest the said islanders should suffer inconvenience by the want of hats, we are graciously pleased to permit them to send their beaver furs to Prussia; and we also permit hats made thereof to be exported from Prussia to Britain, the people thus favoured to pay all costs and charges of manufacturing, interest, commission to our merchants, insurance, and freight going and returning.

And being willing further to favour our said colonies in Britain, we do hereby also ordain and command, that all the thieves, highway and street robbers, housebreakers, forgers, murderers, and villains of every denomination, who have forfeited their lives to the law in Prussia, but whom we, in our great clemency, do not think fit to hang, shall be empited out of our gaols into the said island of Great Britain, for the better peopling of that country.

THE DESCENDANTS OF THE STUARTS.*

EVERYBODY knows Mr. Shandy's white bear, and the treatment which it underwent at his hands. Few imaginary quadrupeds can have passed through so varied a potential existence. Mr. Shandy took it up as a simple white bear, and, by the help of the auxiliary verbs and a little imagination, turned it over, rolled it about, kicked it into all postures, looked at it from all points of view and in all lights, and finally dismissed it as an exhausted subject, with the uncomplimentary expression of a doubt whether, after all, it was better than a black one. Even Corporal Trim, though he had never seen a white bear himself, might have discoursed learnedly and lengthily on that variety of the species ever afterwards, if he paid proper attention to Mr. Shandy's analytical disquisition. No one can lay down Tristram Shandy's autobiography at the end of the chapter referred to, without feeling that every question has been raised, directly or indirectly, which ever need be asked about the natural history of white bears. Some authors become exclusively imbued with the importance of a single fixed idea, till they think it necessary to treat it as the ursine subject was treated by Mr. Shandy. A hobby-horse proper is an animal of a different species, and is handled more gently. A hobby requires not only free space for his gallops, but firm ground to run on. He bears a definite relation to the other units which constitute the mental universe of his creator and rider; and if he does run away occasionally, it is not impossible to follow and catch him before his rider has dismounted. In short, a hobby-horse is a being with a purpose in life, and, as such, one with which it is easy to sympathize. There are few more delectable and edifying sights than a well-educated elderly gentleman cantering away on a good literary or intellectual hobby, far too much in earnest to deal with anything but facts. A controversy on the shipwreck of St. Paul, or the seventh campaign of Cæsar, or even touching the genuineness of an ancient helmet found in the track of the Ten Thousand, involves a certain amount of not unimproving mental exercise in the disputant and his followers. The longer you look into it, the more you will see that, in default of any other temporary interest, it might become an amusing and suggestive object of study and speculation. Where the hobby is co-extensive with the humour of the whole character, as in the case of Mr. Shandy himself, the activity of a perverse ingenuity almost compels our admiration and sympathy. But where an idea is taken up (to return to our former zoological metaphor) for the simple purpose of showing into how

many ramifications or modifications it can be twisted under the white-bear treatment, and by a due adhibition of the auxiliary verbs, sympathy gives place to apathetic indifference, or contemptuous toleration at the best. By the time that the unfortunate monster has appeared in two or three imaginary phases of the preterpluperfect tense and the conditional mood, we are perfectly satisfied that black is quite as good as white, if not better.

This illustration has been forced upon us by the method of Mr. Townend's enthusiastic treatment of the Stuarts. There is no law to prevent Mr. Townend from believing himself, and attempting to persuade his readers, that every member of that family (except Anne and Mary of England) was endowed with every virtue under heaven, and that the misfortune of England in excluding them from her throne was even greater than their misfortune in being excluded. But the reminder of our own mischance grows less impressive when it is repeated for every possible permutation of the ex-royal family's chances of succession. It is difficult, for instance, to view as a most important and leading transaction in the course of English history, with reference to the Act of Succession, the conversion of Prince Edward, the fifth son of the Queen of Bohemia, to the Romish faith, which took place in 1646. Undoubtedly, if he had not taken that one step, and if everything else in the world had happened as in fact it did happen for the next seventy years, his representatives might have sat upon the British throne; but if the course of the world is once altered in the speculations of the historian, it is hard to see why the alteration should stop at one leap more than another. If the event is the master of fools, the most remote and contingent event must surely be the master of the most foolish only. Prince Edward died while Charles the Second was yet a young sovereign, in happy ignorance of the fraud he had committed on his own descendants in depriving them of an appreciable chance of wearing the triple crown of Britain. He had no ground to anticipate that he would be disinterred by Mr. Townend in the nineteenth century, to be shown up as a trustee appointed to preserve contingent remainders who had forfeited his trust. Whether he would have acted in the same way if he had possessed the gift of prophecy, is (as Mr. Townend, with a judicious reluctance to enter upon so abysmal a speculation, informs us) difficult to determine. But as "it must be remembered that this abjuration was, at the time, an event apparently most conducive to his temporal interests," we may perhaps hazard a conjecture that he would even then have weighed with a judicious impartiality the comparative merits of the bird in the bush and in the hand. A due regard to temporal interests appears to have been a strong agent of religious persuasion among the Royal families of Europe, judging even from the instances given in the *Unchronicled Page of England's History*.

Before the moralizing reader has recovered his equanimity after the consideration of Mr. Townend's first problem of historical chances, he is called upon to stigmatize the folly of the Royal Family of Denmark in preventing one of its princes from marrying the penniless Princess Palatine Elizabeth, afterwards Abbess of Hervord:—

How blind men often are in their fancied wisdom and foresight is proved by this event; for had Waldemar married Elizabeth, and had children, in preference to the Princess Sophia's, would have succeeded to the Crown of Great Britain. So that a younger brother of Denmark was forbidden to marry an illustrious English princess on account of her fancied poverty, when, in reality, he would have espoused, *had she lived long enough*, the future Queen of England!

The author's generic fondness for the Stuarts leaves him discontented with having only ten excluded ones to weep over. It is easy now to speculate on hypothetical children, who might have been made rulers in all lands, had they ever existed. But there is no cause shown for doubting that the King of Denmark exercised, on the soundest economical considerations, his Royal duty of dissuading a younger brother from an improvident marriage. The "fancied" poverty was an undeniable reality; and as Elizabeth, "had she lived long enough," would have been ninety-seven years old at the time of Queen Anne's death, Prince Waldemar of Denmark would not have taken much, even on the most acute prevision of the most favourable circumstances, by engaging in a tontine speculation for the Prince Consortship of England.

Yet once more, if not oftener, is the reader enjoined to meditate on an instance of the unlucky miscalculation of chances which prevented a daughter of the Stuarts from occupying the English throne. Elizabeth Charlotte, daughter of Charles Louis the Elector Palatine, and niece of Elizabeth Abbess of Hervord and Sophia Electress of Hanover, "became the wife of Philip Duke of Orleans, and by so doing, though she knew it not, renounced her future position as Queen of England"—being "the fourth member of the Royal Family in succession who refused the fair inheritance proffered her." In this case it must be allowed that a real grievance can be made out, with which it is possible for souls more soft-hearted than logical to sympathize; for the Duchess of Orleans did actually live till 1722, and might have entered, at the age of sixty-two, upon the fair inheritance which would have been proffered her had she remained Protestant. As she appears to have been guided by the purest commercial principles in her profession of the Roman Catholic faith for the sake of a connexion with the Royal Family of France, and, in reality, to have changed more in profession

* *The Descendants of the Stuarts: an Unchronicled Page in England's History.* By William Townend. London: Longmans.

than in creed, it may be assumed that she was capable of regretting her blunder in political speculation (if indeed it was one) as honestly as Mr. Townend regrets it for her. That it did turn out a blunder we are inclined to deny. The Princess Palatine elected to be a Roman Catholic Duchess at the age of nineteen, in 1671. Would she have done better for herself by waiting through the reigns of Charles, James, William and Mary, and Anne, for a contingent Protestant vacancy? It is, to say the least of it, a "difficult point to determine." We doubt whether she would herself have exchanged her fifty years of life as Duchess of Orleans for eight years of sexagenarian royalty. Mr. Townend's readers would have lost considerably by her doing so; for his sketch of the life which she did live is by far the most interesting portion of his volume. It is, or purports to be, chiefly drawn from her own voluminous writings, which (as Mr. Townend states in a phrase of simple nonsensical inaccuracy, or studied esoteric profundity) afford remarkable "facilities for the pen of her *autobiographer*." We had imagined that autobiographies were lives of persons written by themselves, and that Mr. Townend could hardly be anybody's *autobiographer* but his own. But it is not worth quarrelling about. We don't wish to hinder a gentleman from spelling or writing in his own way.

Elizabeth Charlotte had not the pretensions to learning or philosophical acquirements which characterized her aunt, the Abbess of Hervord; but she was gifted with considerable cleverness and tact, as well as with some genuine humour, and a power of asserting and improving her own position, while ready to take easily the unavoidable inconveniences of the world as they came. There is something prettily simple and contemptuous in her final dismissal of her first suitor, the Margrave of Baden Dourlach. She had objected that he was intolerably affected; and at this point the negotiation seems to have dropped. At last the Margrave sent to ask her whether he ought not to obey his father, and marry somebody else—to which singular request she replied that he could not do better than follow the dictates of filial obedience. She professed, in later life, to have been governed herself by a similar motive in marrying the Duke of Orleans. Certainly she never became extravagantly attached to the country, the husband, or the religion she accepted. But she played her part from her first entry into France in such manner as to secure personally the respect which her position demanded. The only personage in the French Court for whom she appears to have felt a genuine admiration and liking was Louis the Fourteenth himself; and the good understanding between them was only broken on the occasion of the marriage of her son, the Duke of Chartres, to the King's natural daughter by Madame de Montespan. Her behaviour when this marriage was first publicly proposed by Louis, as described in the *Duc de St. Simon's Memoirs*, showed a greater sincerity and openness of character than the French Court was accustomed to see:—

I saw her on the evening of that day promenading the galleries of the palace with Madame de Chateauthiers, her confidante, and deservedly so, whom it had in vain been endeavoured to deprive of her. She was walking rapidly, taking long strides, her handkerchief in her hand, weeping without restraint, gesticulating violently, and looking for all the world like Ceres when deprived of her daughter Proserpine, she sought her furiously and demanded her from Jupiter. Every one out of respect made way for her, and only passed her to enter the saloon. At the supper table her conduct was even more outrageous. The King was there as usual; the Duke of Chartres sat next his mother, who never looked at him nor her husband. . . . I noticed that the King offered her of almost every dish which was set before him, but she repulsed him with a brusque air of disdain, which had not the effect of repressing his kindness and attention to her. It was remarked that on leaving the table his Majesty made her a very low bow, during which she wheeled round so nicely upon her heel that when he raised his head he saw nothing but her back advanced a step towards the door. The next day a still more remarkable scene was enacted. On the usual *levée* of the council being held after mass, Madame, who was present, was addressed by her son, who coming up, as was his custom, to kiss her hand, received such a slap on the face that it was heard by the whole court, and the poor prince retired covered with confusion, amid the laughter and jeers of the spectators.

Native French flunkeyism must have looked with unmitigated astonishment, if not with a pitying contempt, on such "outrageous" expressions of feeling on the part of Madame. Long as she had performed the part of a French duchess, she was yet the German princess at heart. Little as it had cost her to change her own faith for the substantial reason of gratifying her own or her father's ambition, she had not learnt the etiquette of bowing to the sovereign will of Louis at all costs, and complacently swallowing the indignity of a *mésalliance* with the offspring of one whom the King had delighted to honour. With Madame de Maintenon she was always on terms of the bitterest antagonism. The hollow reconciliation which took place between them after the death of the Duke of Orleans was acquiesced in by his widow merely for the sake of staying at Court instead of immuring herself in the solitude of a convent or the Castle of Montargis; and open quarrelling or secret counterplotting seems to have been the normal relation between these two women, who hated each other as cordially as became two rival aspirants to the main influence with the King. Elizabeth Charlotte was consistent in disapproving of a cloister life for others as well as herself. When her grand-daughter Adelaide chose to enter a convent, she dissuaded her most vehemently from the "diabolical project." Probably she had felt no great satisfaction in the reputation of dubious sanctity borne by her own aunt Louis, who "renounced the throne of England" only to become Abbess of Maubisson, and swear *par ce sein qui a porté quatorze enfans*. Her outspoken astonishment at the conversion to Romanism of

Maximilian of Hanover—"as he had little faith in general, and none of his relations solicited him to do so, and he was induced by no personal interest"—is an edifying commentary on Massillon's assertion that she had never relapsed into Protestant errors herself, for she had changed her faith "from conviction." Conviction, yes—but conviction only of the solid and immediate advantages which would ensue on her filial obedience. Long before Massillon's funeral oration was pronounced over the illustrious convert, she was fully and honestly aware that for so much at least of her good works she had already had her reward.

Mr. Townend's volume has found a public, or it would not have come to a second edition. Discursive memoirs of princely ladies who married into nearly all the Royal families of Europe, are sure to find readers enough to justify their publication. Even if not eminently graphic in execution, they can hardly fail to be more or less suggestive, according to the turn of mind of those who peruse them. But their suggestiveness lies in their relation to the actual history of the world, not to the Utopian History of England which Mr. Townend would rather have written. As personal memoirs, they might have been made more interesting by more careful construction. As a political embodiment of the author's loyalty to the losing side of a now obsolete question, they show more of the workings of curious sentimentalism than of practical sense. Their tone will hardly meet now-a-days with very extensive or very earnest sympathy. The English world is too much occupied with what goes on under the Guelphs that are, to care very much for a revival of the Stuarts that might have been.

RUBENS IN THE STATE-PAPER OFFICE.*

THAT the Record Office and the State-Paper Office are a very mine of documents of priceless value for the illustration of the private as well as the public life of the past, is well known to all historical students; and it is a wonder that so little use has hitherto been made of these easily-accessible treasures. Mr. W. N. Sainsbury, himself officially employed in the latter of these Offices, has turned his leisure time to good account in extracting from an immense mass of letters and papers all that concerns the English knight and Antwerp painter, Sir Peter Paul Rubens. But if Rubens is the central figure of the historical group thus strangely resuscitated, the background is crowded with the figures of contemporary worthies. Kings, ambassadors, nobles, statesmen, ecclesiastics and artists, flit across the stage. It is like being carried back bodily into the first half of the seventeenth century to read these original letters of the conspicuous personages of that time. We seem to hear their criticisms, to share their observations, to bear a part in their intrigues. We can follow out the mazes of an insincere diplomacy in matters of State, or can interest ourselves in the higgling bargaining for a picture in matters of art. And a thousand minute touches in the unreserved revelations of private correspondence enable us to reconstruct, as it were, the social life of the time. The value of such original documents as these it is quite impossible to exaggerate.

But important as it is that such materials should be made accessible to the public, it would have saved the ordinary reader much trouble, and rendered the work a thousandfold more generally acceptable and useful, had the compiler himself been at the pains to combine into one perspective view the innumerable detached sketches and details which his diligence has recovered. This, however, was perhaps a task beyond his powers. We should have been satisfied with a mere calendar of the Rubens papers, had Mr. Sainsbury digested his scattered fragments into a collected whole. But, failing this, he has done the next best thing in printing the documents in their integrity. We observe that he has had recourse to the old-fashioned plan of publishing this handsome volume by subscription. And it is in just such cases as this, where the expense of printing is unusually great, and the book, from the nature of its contents, can never be widely popular, that both author and publisher may fairly be relieved from pecuniary risk by the contribution of wealthy persons who may be especially interested in the subject. The Belgian Minister, M. Van de Weyer—as well, doubtless, from a patriotic feeling as from his well-known connoisseurship—has been a liberal patron of the present undertaking. We are bound to say that Mr. Sainsbury has edited these documents with great care and ability. The dates are all corrected to the change of style, the translations are faithful, the explanatory notes are useful and ample, and the index is elaborately particular. And, as an example of the minute accuracy of the professional archivist, the coat of arms of Sir Peter, as certified at the Herald's Office at Brussels, with his English augmentation of "on a canton *gules* a lion *or*," is printed in chromo-lithography as the frontispiece of the work.

Perhaps the most satisfactory reflection on examining this volume is, that it leaves undisturbed our previous general impressions of the great painter's character and career. It is surprising indeed how few new facts are added to our former store of knowledge. A few dates are certified or rectified, and we learn something more clearly as to his diplomatic engage-

* *Original Unpublished Papers illustrative of the Life of Sir Peter Paul Rubens, as an Artist and a Diplomatist, preserved in Her Majesty's State-Paper Office.* With an Appendix of Documents respecting the Arundelian Collection, &c. Collected and edited by W. Noel Sainsbury (of Her Majesty's State-Paper Office). London: Bradbury and Evans. 1859.

ments. And in the numerous letters now published for the first time we gain perhaps a more vivid idea of the general ability, the high culture, the tact and good humour and gentlemanly bearing of the man. But we knew all this before, and indeed a physiognomist might almost have deduced it from the painter's well-known face and figure. We feel that we know Rubens better than before; but it is the same man. And those who are least disposed to admire his style as a painter, and who most deplore his influence upon contemporary or succeeding art, will not be the last to appreciate that exuberant manliness and vigour of character, that dash and pluck, that force verging upon coarseness, which were truly reflected in the works of his brush.

Prefaced by a brief sketch of Rubens's life, the letters and documents now printed are arranged in chronological order, with a few explanatory connecting links where they seemed to be required. The first person introduced to us is Sir Dudley Carleton, afterwards Lord Dorchester, who certainly, of all the Englishmen of this period, gains the most from these revelations. He must henceforward share with the famous Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, the credit of being one of the best connoisseurs and collectors of the time, and of having done as much as any one for the cause of art in this country. It was as ambassador at the Hague, about 1616, that Carleton first made the acquaintance of Rubens. He was the first to introduce his paintings into England, and we have all the particulars of the exchange of a chain of his wife's diamonds for a work of the Antwerp master's own hand. Subsequently this nobleman successfully negotiated with Rubens, who had built a princely house at Antwerp, and enriched it with a fine collection of works of art, the exchange of a number of antique statues for some more paintings. Lord Danvers was another English collector, and it was through him that Rubens was first commissioned to paint a picture for Charles Prince of Wales. This picture was disapproved of, and a curious correspondence ensued. Rubens took a dignified line about the matter, and would not admit that he had made an overcharge for a work which, though finished by his pupils, had been partly done by his own hand. "That is not my way of acting," he observes; and afterwards he writes characteristically to Trumbull, "Every one according to his gifts. My endowments are such that I have never wanted courage to undertake any design, however vast in size or diversified in subject."

The diplomatic correspondence of Rubens, when engaged as the agent of the Infanta Isabella in negotiating a peace between Spain, Flanders, and the revolted Provinces and their allies, is new and of great value. But posterity justly persists in valuing the painter higher than the statesman. Mr. Sainsbury has been able by his discoveries to fix the exact date of the only visit paid to England by Rubens, as ambassador of the Archduchess, towards the close of these negotiations. It was in May, 1629, and he stayed here nine or ten months. Some particulars of this visit are curious. It seems that he was almost drowned by the upsetting of his boat, through the awkwardness of his chaplain, as they were shooting London Bridge on their way to Greenwich. The priest was drowned; and Barozzi, the Duke of Savoy's secretary, was saved by some one catching his spur as he rose for the third time. In company with the French Ambassador Rubens visited Cambridge in September, and was made an honorary Master of Arts of that University. Before he returned to Flanders he was knighted by Charles I., and his own sovereign, Philip IV. of Spain, afterwards confirmed by letters patent his equestrian rank.

Some years before this—indeed as early as 1621—Rubens had been commissioned to paint the ceiling of the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall; but it was not till his visit to London that he made the sketches. He finished the paintings at his leisure on his return to Flanders, and we have in these letters full particulars of their completion in 1634, of their packing and forwarding, and of the scandalous delay in paying for them. Charles's exchequer was evidently at a very low ebb. Jordaeus is thought to have assisted Rubens in this great work, and the price was 3000*l.*

In the Appendix, which is by no means the least interesting part of his volume, Mr. Sainsbury has given Rubens' letters (which are all translated in the text) in their original languages. The painter seems to have written in Latin, Italian, French, and Flemish with equal facility, and it is probable that he knew Spanish also. Among other documents of great value we find numerous letters to and from Lord Arundel, of the Arundelian Marbles, "the father of *vertù* in England." It would be a curious and instructive task to identify, so far as might be possible, the pictures procured from Italy by this great collector, of which we have here the invoices and bills of lading and prices. Still more interesting perhaps are the miscellaneous contents of the remainder of the Appendix. Here we have, for example, some charming letters from Lady Anna Carleton to her husband, and a bill of Carleton's nephew for expenses incurred for his uncle on a visit to England. This curious memorandum contains an item "for packing up the Chrysostomes in double canvas to be sent for Venice, 1*l.* 4*s.*" This must most probably have been a copy of Sir H. Savill's fine English edition of that Father, sent as a present to an Italian friend—a point overlooked by Mr. Sainsbury, who, however, is seldom at fault in explaining a hint or an allusion. Then there is the account of the large sums of money obtained from Charles I. by Gentileschi, an Italian painter settled

in London, which Sir Balthazar Gerbier at least, himself an art-critic, who has left us the memorandum, thought wholly out of proportion to the work performed. Gerbier makes out that the Italian had received above 4000*l.*, while his pictures were worth no more than 270*l.* Some of the details are singular. Endymion Porter, for instance, is set down as receiving at least a part of 500*l.* expended by Gentileschi as bribes to those who could further his suit, and there is one item, "afore the Duke went to Ré the Duke told me that Gentileschi squised out of his purse 400*l.*" Other documents give facts about the residence in England of Le Sueur, the sculptor—the artist who cast the bronze statue of Charles I. now at Charing-cross, at the expense, in the first instance, of the Earl of Arundel. Next we have a variety of papers relating to the purchase for the Royal collection of the pictures and statues belonging to the Duke of Mantua. Many of these are quite new in the information they afford. The agents for the purchase were Nicholas Lanier and Daniel Nys, the former being Master of his Majesty's Music, but also a great lover and good judge of the sister art. Many of these Mantuan treasures cannot be traced; but among them were the Correggio, "Mercury teaching Cupid to read in the presence of Venus," now in the National Gallery, and also the nine pictures by Andrea Mantegna, representing the "Triumph of Julius Cæsar," now at Hampton Court. The whole cost seems to have amounted to above 18,000*l.* Other notables who figure in Mr. Sainsbury's Appendices are Toby Matthew—son of the Archbishop of York of the same name, and afterwards a convert to the Roman Church—and John Torrentius, the painter of Haarlem, who chose such obscene subjects that his works were burned by the executioner, and himself condemned by the magistrate to torture and imprisonment for twenty years. King Charles interceded for this reprobate, begged off the remainder of his term of incarceration, and brought him to England, promising "to take good care and keep him within the bounds of duty and of the reverence he owes to religion." But the profligate artist, as might be expected, was never reformed. Finally we have some documents about Mytens the painter, and some curious letters about the library of the great Orientalist, Thomas Van Erpen, known to scholars as Erpenius. His books were offered to the Duke of Buckingham, but Mr. Sainsbury has not discovered whether the purchase was ever made. The agent writes—"The rate of them is 4000 gilders or 400*l.*; upon his deathbed he reckoned that they cost him near 5000 gilders, and told his wife that the Bishop of Winchester would give her the money for them." This bishop was Launcelet Andrews.

Many other facts and anecdotes could doubtless be gleaned from these documents, for the names of the celebrities of those times are profusely scattered through our editor's pages. The Count-Duke of Spain, the Duke of Buckingham, and the Queen of Bohemia, Bacon, Camden, Inigo Jones, and Ben Jonson, and, as might be expected, a host of painters and artists, are referred to more or less often, and with more or less particularity. One thing is especially striking. Not in any letter or paper is there the slightest hint or forecasting of the terrible political convulsion then so imminent in England. We conclude with a characteristic anecdote of Henrietta-Maria:—"Gerbier relates that one morning, as the King was combing his head, he found a white hair, which he sent to the Queen in merriment; Henrietta-Maria immediately wrote back that Don Carlos would cause many more to come before the Emperor gave up the Palatinate."

STRUGGLES IN FALLING.*

NOVELS form the staple reading of most young people who can choose their own books. A first vague literary ambition, therefore, generally takes the form of novel-writing. *Struggles in Falling* is, in all probability, a maiden effort. It has many traces of juvenile authorship. It displays a greater acquaintance with the circulating library than with life. There is a description in it of schoolboys and their ways which would scarcely have been written if Mr. Hughes had not given to the world the *Rugby* experiences of Tom Brown; and an account of a day with the hounds which, while it suggests a doubt of Mr. Lester's ever having been in the hunting-field, leaves no question of his having read certain chapters of Mr. Kingsley or Mr. Whyte Melville with admiration. Mr. Lester, however, does not always draw from such healthy sources. The latter half of his little volume derives its inspiration evidently from French novels of the kind which we are in the habit of considering characteristically French. We do not charge Mr. Lester with plagiarising—he simply imitates.

Struggles in Falling, so far as its author had an object at all in writing it, seems to have been written in contradiction or qualification of Virgil's hackneyed assertion as to the ease of the descent to Avernus. If the descent is easy, it is, at all events, seldom rapid. Few tread the downward path unwarned or un hindered. This reversed *Pilgrim's Progress*, like the other, has its conflicts and hesitations, and occasional retracings of the steps. The soldier, defeated in the moral struggle, does not generally throw away his arms as he quits the field, but, like the Parthian, for a while continues the fight, even as he flees, and retreats with his face to the enemy. Mr. Lester apparently

* *Struggles in Falling*. By Henry John Lester. London: Bentley. 1858.

aims to show us the process of corruption in a mind naturally well-endowed in many respects, but unstable and self-indulgent—to exhibit to us a fair edifice built upon the sand, and its inevitable fall. Unfortunately, by mixing up this design with theories of race and physical organization and mesmerico-magnetic powers, he obscures, if he does not altogether destroy, the lesson he would convey.

His hero enters life with an hereditary tendency to insanity, and is so warped by cruel accidents as to leave him scarcely a chance of striking into the right path. That we may not appear to misrepresent our author, we will give an outline of his tale, though we confess that our space might be better occupied. Charles Vesey is the representative of an old county family, moderately rich, and of mixed Norman and Irish descent. All the members of it have been marked by "invariable restlessness," due, the author informs us, to their "Irish blood," and by "a very wandering spirit," which he attributes to their Norman lineage. A yet more questionable characteristic is the dislike of the moon, for which, "from time immemorial," they have been noted. This peculiarity, together with the others, Vesey inherits. He is struck with a mysterious terror, and shudders from head to foot, when he sees the "baleful planet." Under its influence, when at the full, his father, who had previously been the raving-mad occupant of a lunatic asylum, commits suicide. At school Vesey falls under the influence of a boy-Jesuit, who acts Damon to his Pythias. His moral sense is further corrupted and his views of life receive a twist from his admiring study of "Rochefoucault, Richelieu, and Machiavelli," in preference to Homer and Euclid. The author states these things as causes determining his hero's future character and career, but he does not show us them in their operation, actually taking effect. This effect is inadequately counteracted by his friendship for the saintly Gerard O'More, who, in conformity with the established precedent of saints in novels, dies early of a lingering disease. We pass over several details of "moving accidents by flood and field," a fight with a highwayman, a bold escape from drowning, an encounter with robbers in Spain, &c. (introduced to illustrate Vesey's abundant physical courage, and constitutional moral cowardice), and come to the great calamity of his life—his marriage, which takes place without his knowing it. He is acting charades at a country house, and personates the husband of a middle-aged Scotch lady—red-haired, hard-featured, and cross-tempered. By way of humouring the joke, he acknowledges her at the supper-table as his wife; and finds that in acknowledging he has unwittingly made her so. His efforts to release himself prove vain. A separation is all the concession he can extort. About this time his mother, who almost alone had any restraining and purifying influence upon him, suddenly dies. A tour on the Continent brings him into acquaintance with characters not unknown to fiction, of whom the chief are a dissipated count, a German sceptic, who talks impossible transcendentalism, and a Frenchman with the usual French ignorance of all that relates to England. The influences predominant in this society unsettle his religious faith, as his early reading and embittering experiences have done his moral convictions. Harassed and disquieted, he seeks relief for a time in active philanthropic work. But this fails to provide him with the requisite "physical or psychical stimulus;" and he sinks into what the author styles a state of "ardent listlessness," in which "the devil is said to find the greatest opportunities and best chance of success." The devil tempts him, as he did St. Anthony, in the form of a young lady, Miss Agnes Delmar. Her chief attraction lies, like Samson's strength, in her hair, which has curious electric qualities. From honourable motives, Vesey endeavours for a time to conceal his passion. An extraordinary accident leads to its disclosure. As Miss Delmar and he ride out together, her horse takes fright, and leaps over a precipice and across a chasm. He "alights on a sort of fragment which had been loosened from the mountain the winter before, and hung almost in the air, still held to the main-stock by roots of trees, and a narrow partition of clay and gravel." "That slender link was gradually growing narrower." Vesey, dismounting, gains the fragment by a miraculous leap. To diminish the pressure on it, he backs Miss Delmar's horse over its edge. But the frail support slowly gives way. In the presence of what seems inevitable death, Vesey avows his passion, and the circumstance which, making it hopeless, has kept him silent. Wrapping his cloak round Miss Delmar, and so holding her as to place himself undermost, they fall together. She escapes scarcely injured; he is taken up all but dead. After a long and doubtful illness, he recovers. The remainder of the book is the history of a guilty passion which leads to the breaking by both of sacred ties, their flight together, and the lady's death. Vesey sinks lower and lower, till his "last struggle with evil is over." Cynic and fatalist, left alone on the earth with his misused and blighted life, "that which has once before been spoken of a certain man, will in all likelihood have to be said of" him—"It had been better for that man that he had never been born."

Mr. Lester promises at some future day to resume his hero's history. But as he has already fallen his lowest, and struggled his last, there can be no more "Struggles in Falling" to record. And the sentence just quoted warns us not to expect a narration of counter "Struggles in Rising"—a description of steps recalled and an escape to the upper air. We would recommend Mr. Lester in any future attempt, for his own sake, to break loose entirely from his present subject, and to seek some healthier

theme. Side by side with the history of Charles Vesey, and intersecting it at a few points, runs that of Shelton Douglass, a mysterious being with "a heart of ice and an imagination of fire," endowed, moreover, with an evil eye, by which he looks into disease and death the objects of his vindictive pursuit. The author expresses his belief in the reality of this power, which he resolves into animal magnetism. He half asserts his belief in demoniac possession also, as a phenomenon still subsisting, and attributes Vesey's conduct to some such evil inspiration.

Mr. Charles Reade, in the preface to one of his stories, asserts that the incidents which his critics have denounced as unnatural are true, and that those which they command as probable are mere figments of his own. The statement is, of course, to be received; but it by no means answers the objection to which it is intended as a reply. Fiction should not emulate the "strangeness of truth." Art essentially requires congruity; and should eschew what shocks the feeling of reasonable likelihood. *Lusus natura* are, in a certain sense, natural; but to describe them however faithfully, would not be to "hold the mirror up to nature." Putting his doctrines of the evil eye and magnetic fascination aside, there is no incident in Mr. Lester's volume which can be pronounced absolutely impossible. But they, and the character of the hero, are far too improbable and exceptional to enter legitimately into a tale of real life and modern society. If he desire to carry his readers with him, he should deal with events, agencies, and influences which they can take for granted without violent straining.

We have spoken more leniently of this book than we should have done if it were not so evidently the work of a very young writer. Mr. Lester's inexperience is shown in more ways than one. He has a tendency to over-crowd his little stage with personages who do not help on the progress of the drama, or exercise any influence upon the fortune of the principal actors. People are introduced simply to be described; and the merit of the description, we must say, does not often atone for its irrelevancy. Scenery is depicted and emotions are analysed frequently for no better reason than that no one ever observed the scene or experienced the emotions. Mr. Lester's sensibility, too, is of that exquisite kind which—

Droops in soft sorrow o'er a withered flower,
O'er a dead jackass pours the pearly shower, &c.,

and which seldom survives early youth. His lament over some stranded star-fishes would, if versified, rival Mrs. Leo Hunter's celebrated "Ode to an Expiring Frog."

The book, however, really displays in its concluding pages very considerable ability. The ability is ill-directed, or rather altogether undirected. If we cannot recommend *Struggles in Falling* to our readers, we should be sorry to dissuade the author from trying his hand again.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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AUTHORS OF THE AGE—WILLIS'S ROOMS, KING-STREET.—Mr. S. C. HALL, F.S.A., will have the honour of presenting a SERIES OF WRITTEN PORTRAITS (from personal acquaintance) of the AUTHORS OF THE AGE—"Great Men and Women of the Epoch"—to be comprised in Two Lectures, the First of which will be given on FRIDAY EVENING, JANUARY 28th; the Second on FRIDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 4th, commencing punctually at Eight o'clock.

Reserved and Numbered Seats for the Two Lectures, 8s.; Unreserved Seats for ditto, 5s.; which may be obtained at Mr. Mitchell's, Royal Library, 33, Old Bond-street.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS WILL READ, at ST. MARTIN'S HALL, on FRIDAY EVENING, January 28th, at Eight o'clock, THE POOR TRAVELLER, MRS. GAMP, and THE TRIAL FROM PICKWICK. The Doors will be Opened at Seven. Stalls (Numbered and Reserved), 4s.; Centre Area and Balconies, 2s.; Back Seats, 1s.—Tickets, at Messrs. Chapman and Hall's, Publishers, 103, Piccadilly; and at St. Martin's Hall, Long-acre.

NOTICE.—It is found unavoidable to appoint TWO MORE READINGS of the CHRISTMAS CAROL and THE TRIAL FROM PICKWICK. They will take place at St. Martin's Hall, on Thursday Evening, 3rd February, and Thursday Evening, 10th February.

BARNUM'S FIFTH AND LAST ENTERTAINMENT at ST. JAMES'S HALL, FRIDAY, January 28th, "MONEY-MAKING AND HUMBUG," with Original Anecdotes, Experiences, and Pictorial Illustrations.

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NOTICE TO PUBLISHERS, &c.—Mr. BARNUM has taken legal steps, pursuant to Act 5 and 6 Wm. IV., c. 65, whereby Publishers or Vendors of his Lectures will be liable to prosecution.

GEOLOGY.—KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON.—PROFESSOR TENNANT, F.G.S., will commence a COURSE OF LECTURES ON GEOLOGY, on FRIDAY MORNING, January 28th, at Nine o'clock. They will be continued on each succeeding Wednesday and Friday at the same hour. Fee, £2 12s. 6d.

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE DIRECTORS HAVE TO INTIMATE THAT THE BOOKS OF THE SOCIETY CLOSE, FOR THE CURRENT YEAR, AT 1ST MARCH NEXT, AND THAT PROPOSALS FOR ASSURANCE LODGED ON OR BEFORE THAT DATE WILL ENTITLE POLICIES TO ONE YEAR'S ADDITIONAL BONUS OVER LATER ENTRANTS.

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I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your obliged and faithful,

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